

Hamas could agree to elections

AMMAN (AFP) — A Palestinian group waging a guerrilla war against Israel could take part in elections in the occupied territories, a newspaper reported Monday. The newspaper said Sheikh Yassin, head of the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, had said he was in favour of participating in elections in the Gaza Strip and West Bank if they were for a legislative council. Sheikh Yassin, currently an Israeli prisoner, wrote in letters that he wanted Hamas to become the opposition party in such a council, the London-based Arabic newspaper reported. Hamas rejected the suggestion after it was signed between the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel on Sept. 13. The deal calls for elections in a council with limited legislative powers to take place by July. The newspaper report did not make clear if the proposed council met Hamas' expectations for law-making authority. But it was the first sign that Hamas, which has a strong following in the territories, could in the future take part in the peace process. Israeli officials said in October that PLO leader Yasser Arafat had twice requested Sheikh Yassin's release, but that the authorities refused. The Hamas leader was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1991 for ordering the killing of two Israeli soldiers.



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German foreign minister in Saudi Arabia

JEDDAH (AP) — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel arrived Monday for talks with Saudi Arabian leaders on the Middle East peace process. Kinkel's first trip to Saudi Arabia, he is scheduled to meet the foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, and King Fahd. Mr. Kinkel will then go on to Jordan, another prominent player in the U.S.-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace process. Mr. Kinkel's trip is in advance of a European Community (EC) foreign ministers meeting in Brussels Nov. 8 to discuss political and economic support for the Sept. 13 peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Mr. Kinkel was quoted as saying in a recent interview with the London-based Al Hayat daily that Germany will be "normalising" its relations with the PLO. But he cautioned that full diplomatic relations with the PLO could only come when there is a Palestinian state. Saudi Arabia is Bonn's primary trading partner in the Arab World and Mr. Kinkel will be seeking to develop those links with joint economic ventures. Germany's deputy defence minister, Jurg Schonbohm, also visited Saudi Arabia recently.

Assad denies 'warning' Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad was quoted Monday as describing Jordanian-Syrian relations as good. He also referred to Jordan's constant commitment to comprehensive, just and permanent peace in the region. The Syrian president denied in an interview published in the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram newspaper Monday that Syria had "warned" Jordan against striking a peace agreement with Israel and said that Syria had good relations with Jordan.

Japanese mission in talks with PLO

TUNIS (R) — An aid mission from Japan, which has promised up to \$200 million in assistance to the Palestinians, has arrived in Tunis for talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), a Japanese embassy spokesman said on Monday. The group will meet senior PLO officials on Tuesday to begin talks on projects to help the Palestinians rebuild their economy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said. The two sides will also "exchange views on ways for Japan to help the Palestinians," the spokesman added. Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa announced last month that Japan would provide up to \$200 million in aid to the Palestinian people in the next two years.

Israeli-allied militia captures Syrian

MARIJAYOUN (AFP) — Israel's proxy militia announced Monday it had captured a heavily-armed Syrian guerrilla trying to infiltrate the Jewish state's self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon. The South Lebanon Army (SLA) said the 26-year-old man was armed with an AK-47 submachine-gun, grenades and ammunition when he was stopped and taken at the edge of the "security zone." He offered no resistance.

Columbia lands in California

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE (AP) — Columbia and its medical research crew swooped through the clear desert sky and landed Monday after 14 days in space — the longest flight in shuttle history. The spacecraft and seven astronauts landed at Edwards Air Force Base at 1506 GMT. A clear sky and light wind in the Mojave desert made for virtually perfect landing weather. "Congratulations on a very successful life sciences mission," mission control told commander John Blaha and his crew.

Bosnian chief put under house arrest

SARAJEVO (AFP) — The chief of the Bosnian army's general staff, Sefer Halilovic, has been placed under house arrest, charged with covering up war crimes, a senior government official said Monday. The move against Gen. Halilovic follows the arrest last week of two local commanders in Sarajevo and the smashing of a network of criminal activities. The official, who would not be identified, said Gen. Halilovic was accused of concealing war crimes, in particular in the Mostar and Jajanska areas.

Tehran seeks Lebanese probe

BEIRUT (AP) — Iran has asked Lebanon to set up an investigating committee to determine the fate of four Iranian soldiers missing in Lebanon since Israel's 1982 invasion, the Iranian embassy said Monday. The new Iranian ambassador, Hamayoun Alizadeh, conveyed the request on Friday when he presented his credentials to Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, the embassy said in a statement.

Israel tables plan for Gaza pullout

Combined agency dispatches

EABA, Egypt — Israel for the first time presented the Palestinians with a detailed plan for a military withdrawal on the Gaza Strip at autonomy negotiations here Monday. But the opening of the fourth round of talks on implementing self-rule was marred by a third day of violence in the occupied territories. Settlers, who set up roadblocks, rioted around a West Bank refugee camp firing shots at Palestinians, smashing cars and house windows and burning a classroom, correspondents reported (see separate story).

General Yom Tov Samia, army commander in Gaza, gave the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) delegation at Taba one map showing current army positions and another showing proposed withdrawal lines, Israeli delegation spokesman Ami Gluska said.

The plan includes "modalities of redeployment and withdrawal for the Israeli army," Mr. Gluska said. It also defines the roads which the army intends to keep under its control for the safety of settlers who remain on the strip. He refused to give further details and the maps were not shown to the press.

But Israeli sources said the army would pull back first from Palestinian refugee camps and towns on the Gaza Strip.

It would redeploy to three perimeters:

- Around settlements north of Gaza City;
- Around two settlements close to Gaza; and
- Around the Gush Katif block of settlements in the south where the military headquarters would be relocated from Gaza City.

The three areas would be protected by electronic barriers and linked to Israel by roads which avoid built-up Palestinian areas and have no roadside dwellings.

Palestinian delegate Hasan Asfour said his side would present a counter-proposal in a day or two. He was tight-lipped when asked his response to the Israeli map, quipping: "We saw the map, we listened, and it has many colours."

Still there were no signs of tension. The Israeli spokesman described the meeting as "business-like." An Israeli and Palestinian delegate spoke animatedly in Arabic while walking arm-in-arm during a recess.

The peace deal, signed in Washington on Sept. 13, says Israel will withdraw from Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho to make way for Palestinian self-rule. The extent of the Israeli withdrawal is



Palestinian schoolboys remove what was left from their desks, burned by Jewish settlers in the schoolroom of the Jalazun refugee camp Monday (AFP photo)

Settlers continue riots against Palestinians, torch classroom

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (Agencies) — Jewish settlers blocked roads with burning tyres and torched a Palestinian classroom Monday in the fourth day of their riots against a government they say is sacrificing them for peace with the Palestinians.

The rampages erupted three days ago when Muslim militants killed a settler, and in their scope and intensity marked a turning point in the settlers' resistance to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) negotiations.

The rage also underscored how easily extremists on both sides can upset a peace agreement by provoking the other side into harsh reactions.

"Every crazy settler and every crazy Muslim fundamentalist can spoil everything in a minute," said Israeli journalist Danny Rubinstein, a veteran observer of the occupied territories.

Extremist violence appeared more likely with every report on progress in the negotiations on Palestinian self-rule. A majority of Israelis and Palestinians support the talks that resumed in Egypt on Monday (see separate story), leaving opponents in both camps isolated and feeling they have little left to lose.

In Beit El, a settlement of 3,000 about 15 kilometres north of Jerusalem, residents said Monday that they would retaliate harshly for any Arab attack on Jews because they felt the government no longer protected them.

Before dawn settlers who blocked a road block near a refugee camp had smashed windows in Arab homes and damaged cars, an AFP photographer reported.

Palestinians responded by throwing stones and about a dozen settlers opened fire in the dark although no one was wounded.

The settlers, armed with Uzis, took aim and were definitely trying to hit Palestinians, the photographer said. Soldiers arrived after about 10 minutes and restored calm.

Shortly after a group of Israelis broke into a school run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) at Jalazun camp near Ramallah, an UNRWA spokesman said.

"The classroom was completely burnt out after settlers piled up all the benches and set them ablaze," said spokesman Sandro Tucci. "We are checking unconfirmed reports that bottles of gas were left in two other classrooms."

"The windows were smashed in eight classrooms between five and six a.m.," he added.

Two Palestinians died Sunday, one shot by soldiers and another by his Israeli employer who was stabbed.

Meanwhile 50 senior reserve army officers and right-wing academics called Monday on soldiers and policemen to disobey any orders to dismantle settlements, the Haaretz newspaper reported.

Such orders were "illegal" according to a petition from the group which included reserve generals and was published by the daily.

"We are appealing to your conscience and asking you not to take part in any plan to evacuate Jewish villages," the petition read.

Last French hostage released in Algeria

ALGIERS (Agencies) — A Frenchwoman freed by kidnappers after more than a week's captivity left Algeria Monday, some 24 hours after her husband and a colleague flew to Paris after their release.

Michele Thevenot was accompanied to Algiers airport by French Ambassador Bernard Kessedjian. They paused briefly for photographs but neither made any statement to waiting reporters.

A Muslim fundamentalist leader in exile urged foreigners to leave the country, and hundreds have already left after suspected fundamentalist insurgents killed seven expatriates since September.

Government forces who killed at least six kidnappers to free two of the three French consular workers on Saturday night pressed on with their hunt Monday for other suspects.

Ms. Thevenot was freed Sunday night near the French embassy in an exclusive hillside section of the capital.

Ex-captives Alain Freyssier and Mrs. Thevenot's husband, Jean-Claude, returned to Paris on Sunday night, greeted by French officials.

"We weren't badly treated during our detention," Mr. Freyssier said in a brief declaration. "Our kidnappers gave us food in a proper way. They didn't use violence of any kind against us."

French officials thanked the government of Prime Minister Redha Malek for the successful dragnet they launched throughout the capital to recover the hostages.

But the kidnapping of the three French consular workers in broad daylight downtown Oct. 24 was still a blow to the government, which has been unable to stamp out a 21-month-old fundamentalist resistance.

Attacker on border post worked in New York mosque

AMMAN (J.T.) — The militant who led an armed attack on a Jordanian border post on Friday used to work in the same New York mosque as the alleged mastermind behind the World Trade Centre bombing, his widow said Monday.

Iman Hajjat said her husband Hassan Hussein Hajjat, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin, worked at Brooklyn's Al Farouk Mosque while he was in the United States, from 1991 until his return to Jordan a few months ago.

Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the spiritual leader of Muslim militants in Egypt who is currently under arrest in the United States on conspiracy charges, preached at Al Farouk.

Oakley launches new bid

MOGADISHU (AFP) — American tanks rumbled through the streets of Mogadishu Monday in an apparent show of military might as the U.S. special envoy to Somalia, Robert Oakley, arrived.

Mr. Oakley will try to persuade feuding Somali factional leaders to start peace negotiations.

It was not immediately clear which clan leaders he would meet during his four-day stay in the Somali capital, but a spokesman for the Somali National Alliance (SNA) headed by warlord Moham-

Amman Third District: The acid test for politics and politicians

This is the third in a series of articles by Jordan Times correspondents on candidates and campaigns in the individual constituencies in the Kingdom

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The parliamentary race for Amman's Third District, being the most affluent and elitist among all voting constituencies in the Kingdom, is considered by many as the ultimate litmus test for candidates running on political, rather than clanish and strictly provincial, platforms.

It is the only district where a woman has a real hope of being elected, where the Christian seat will be contested mainly by sworn leftists and radical pan-Arabists, and where the Islamic Action Front (IAF) most wants to win.

The race for the constituency's five seats (three Muslims, one Christian and one Circassian) is probably one of the most fiercely contested and financially expensive in the Kingdom.

Judging by the number of registered voters (104,000), this district also ranks as the second most-populated in the Amman area.

In order to win, a candidate needs between 4,000 and 4,250 votes if the turnout for voting in Nov. 8 is similar to that in 1989 (about 50 per cent), according to a study done recently by Al Urduin Al Jadid (New Jordan) Research Centre.

But the candidates themselves (who include in their ranks a former prime minister and a son and a daughter of two other former prime ministers) project that higher figures are needed to win, particularly by the con-

The IAF candidate, Dr. Keilani, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood team that joined Mudar Badran's coalition government in the first six months of 1991, is a strong contender who is said to be counting on some 5,000 solid votes by automatic supporters.

The absence from the race this time of strong Islamist contenders, who ran for the same district before, will guarantee that most, if not all, of the Islamist conservative vote will go to Dr. Keilani, a former professor of Sharia at Jordan University.

The Islamists who are not running this time are: former Deputy Laila Shbeilat, an independent who quit politics in the summer and who won the highest number of votes in 1989; Circassian contender Walid Shukri Sbabsough, who won a sizeable 6,873 votes in the same campaign; and Muslim Brotherhood candidate Ghateh Abu Abboud, who ranked fourth in the same district in '89 with 5,802 votes.

The candidacy of another independent Islamist, Sheikh Sami Najjar, may hurt Dr. Keilani's chances, but a bigger threat would have probably come from the running of another popular Islamist candidate, Sheikh Abdul Qader Al Sheikh, who preaches at Western Amman's Sido Al Kurdi Mosque. Sheikh Al Sheikh withdrew his candidacy earlier in the campaign without giving particular reasons, but it is understood from observers that his withdrawal from the race should also benefit Mr. Abu Ragheb, whose supporters include Jordanians of roots in Damascus (Shwam).

Taher Al Masri

a sizeable and affluent voting bloc in the Third District. Had he stayed on, the Sheikh, being the imam of Shwam mosque, would have taken votes from both Mr. Abu Ragheb and Dr. Keilani.

In 1989, Mr. Masri won 6,482 votes and Mr. Nabulsi won 7,801, while Mr. Shbeilat's count was 14,740. Mr. Abu Ragheb also ran in 1989 but could only manage fifth place with 4,992 votes.

The Circassian seat is being contested by two women, Jeanette Mufti and Toujan Faisal, and one man, former Deputy Mansour Murad.

Mr. Murad, who won in 1989 with 8,747 votes, is not expected to fare as well in this round, partially because of the electoral change, and also because many voters have been disenchanted with his performance in the 11th Parliament due to his ultra radical views that often found him in league with the parliamentary bloc of the Brotherhood when it came voting on crucial issues.

Mr. Murad, who projected

Fares Nabulsi

himself as a Palestinian fighter and a leftist during the previous campaign, was able to attract a combination of the "Palestinian vote" and leftists who gave him their second or third vote when they could vote for a bloc of five. This will not be the case this time, however, since "Palestinian voters" are expected to back either Mr. Masri or Mr. Nabulsi, and the leftists will have an array of choices before them, but

Ali Abu Ragheb

mainly Mr. Nabulsi, or candidates vying for the Christian seat.

Ms. Mufti, who ran in 1989 but won only 2,604 votes, is likely to attract not only the support of many Circassians but also that of liberal women who want to see a female deputy under the dome. Her chances, observers believe, are much better this time, if only because one of the main contenders for the seat, Kamal Jallouka, withdrew from

Ibrahim Zeid Al Keilani

the race yesterday and urged his voters to support Ms. Mufti.

Her strongest competition will come from the other woman in the race, Ms. Faisal, an outspoken candidate who incurred the wrath of the Brotherhood during the 1989 elections mainly due to her strong feminist views. But Ms. Faisal ran in the largely conservative Fifth District at that time and was only able to secure 1,328 votes. Her supporters, theoretically, could increase in the more liberal Third District.

The Islamists, some observers believe, will play an important role in determining the winner of the Circassian seat if they decide to strengthen the hand of Mr. Murad against the women contenders. But the Islamists hands are full since whatever votes they have will go to Dr. Keilani, who needs all the support he can muster to get elected.

Candidates and campaign managers who spoke to the

(Continued on page 5)

Peace efforts bring more Somali fighting

MOGADISHU (AP) — Talk of peace seems to be on everyone's tongue in Mogadishu, but they are keeping weapons in their hands.

The last week has brought death and confrontation, all allegedly in the name of reunifying a city split by a factional dispute that has hurt into the open again after a 19-month-old ceasefire.

A peace march that was supposed to cross the dividing line last Monday led to a flurry of firefights between supporters of Mohammed Farah Aided, who controls the southern part of the city, and Ali Mahdi Mohammed, who rules the north.

Clan elders usually command respect and try to mediate disputes. But when a group of them sought a ceasefire to the battles that raged over three days near the key Kilometre Four traffic circle, they came under fire.

On Sunday, several men came to the hotel where most journalists stay to say they are promoting peace within General Aided's faction. As they left, they were confronted by a group of angry young Aided supporters. A warning shot staved off possible violence.

This is the atmosphere that U.S. special envoy Robert Oakley was to find Monday in his bid to foster a lasting peace settlement in a country shattered by three years of civil war, starvation and banditry before a U.S.-led multinational force arrived nearly 11 months ago.

Many of the improvements in the security of Mogadishu's streets have been lost during four months of attacks on U.N. forces that have killed dozens of peacekeepers. Gunmen openly tote AK-47 rifles again. Dozens of rocket-propelled grenades blasted at targets in the last week.

In the midst of the violence, there are signs of division, of voices calling for a different path to reconciliation.

Mohammad, Mohammad

Guled is one of the "promoters of peace" from within Gen. Aided's faction. A businessman before the war, he talks of the thirst that Gen. Aided and Mr. Ali Mahdi have for power.

"This source of the problem is these two power-ambitious people," he said in an interview Sunday. "Neither Ali Mahdi nor Aided want peace. They want to keep Mogadishu divided."

He said the two warlords have milked the tribal loyalties and natural mistrusts of the hundreds of thousands of people who fled to the city from around the dangerous countryside for food and safety.

"They know how to mislead the people," Mr. Guled said.

"They know they won't get any political chance if the democratic process prevails in the country," Mr. Guled said. "They will be kicked out."

That is why Mr. Guled worries, about the planned withdrawal of U.S. forces from the U.N. contingent by March 31. If the country is not well on its way to getting back on its feet, it could easily fall back into the same chaos that reigned a year ago and threatens to prevail again.

"It will be worse than before," he said. "We have to convince the people we need peace, to show the world there are more than the two factions."

While Mr. Guled said many people hoped that Gen. Aided would be captured early in his four-month-old period of hiding, he said that no longer should be a priority.

"It's not necessary to chase him," Mr. Guled said. "Let him participate in the national reconciliation. I think he won't have any political credibility with the Somali people. If the Somali people want him as head of state, they deserve him. But I don't think so. They see Aided as a madman."



PROTEST: A Palestinian woman holding the picture of her three jailed sons shows her anger to Israeli policemen looking on during a demonstration in Arab East Jerusalem Monday, demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners.

Some 100 relatives and friends of Palestinian prisoners, marched from the siege of International Red Cross to the U.S. consulate (AFP photo)

Iran tourism faces major hurdles

By Laurent Maillard
Agence France Presse

TEHRAN — Iran has stepped up efforts to revive its tourism industry, hard-hit by war and years of neglect, but faces obstacles and opposition from Islamic hardliners.

Iran, which prior to the 1979 Islamic revolution was a major tourist centre renowned for spectacular historical monuments and natural beauty, has witnessed a steady decline in the number of foreign visitors.

Some 700,000 tourists visited Iran every year before the revolution, but the number dropped to a mere 7,000 in 1988, at the end of an eight-year war with Iraq and amid radical Islamic internal politics.

The number, has picked up since as a result of open-door policies pursued by the government of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, but it is still far from the goal set by the tourism industry at the beginning of the five-year development programme in 1989.

The industry anticipated receiving 900,000 tourists per year, by 1993 and an income of \$450 million in hard currency, but according to officials from the culture ministry only \$103 million were earned in 1992.

The officials said some 200,000 tourists, mainly from Islamic countries, visited here last year.

It was not clear whether the figure includes business trips by foreigners, which have jumped dramatically in the past four years due to a sharp rise in imports.

The problems facing the industry range from a lack of proper accommodation, to strict Islamic social laws, to opposition from hardliners.

Iran has not built a single major hotel since the revolution, and services provided by the existing ones — generally confiscated properties previously owned by the bourgeoisie — are ill-equipped by international standards.

The industry is also impaired by a shortage of domestic flights needed to transfer tourists to provincial cities, and the state-owned tourist agencies are few in number and far from efficient.

All this bodes poorly for the blossoming of tourism to a country that offers visitors such splendours as the city of Esfahan, one of the jewels in the crown of Muslim civilisation, and Persepolis, the palace built more than 2,500 years ago by the great emperors of the Persian empire.

To tackle the problems, the Foundation of the Needy and War Disabled (FNWD) — a non-profit organisation overseeing confiscated properties — has unveiled plans to privatise tourist agencies and has allocated \$50 million for building hotels and remodeling the existing ones.

The government has organised fairs to publicise the issue and last week set up a seminar on promoting tourism.

In addition to infrastructure problems, the industry also faces stiff opposition from the Islamic hardliners, who fear revived tourism could endanger the country's Islamic lifestyle and pave the way for the return of the Western influences that stoked the fires of the revolution.

"We should remember how Western values, imported through tourism, dominated and threatened the very texture of our culture," warned the radical newspaper Kayhan last month.

"What international tourism seeks to promote is to give a free reign to cultural promiscuity," it said.

Resalat, a conservative religious daily took a similar line and attacked a fair on tourism set up last September.

Kollek in tough fight to stay mayor

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Teddy Kollek, for 28 years a campaigner for peaceful coexistence with Arabs, faces a tough fight Tuesday in the first popular vote since Israel's historic handshake with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Opinion polls show challenger Ehud Olmert, 48, of the hardline Likud Party, running neck-and-neck with Mr. Kollek, 82.

Forecasters say that to win the city election Mr. Kollek may need support from Arabs who normally boycott polls.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who backs Mr. Kollek, called the vote a possible test of Israel's Sept. 13 peace deal when Mr. Rabin shook PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's hand.

"It could be a very meaningful signal from the viewpoint of someone who wants to give peace a chance," Mr. Rabin told the weekly newspaper Kol Ha'ir.

Under the Israeli-PLO peace deal, the future of Jerusalem is to be discussed in negotiations at least two years off. Yet peace and the fate of the Holy City have ranked high on the campaign agenda.

Mr. Kollek and Mr. Olmert agree on the "unity" of the Jewish West with the Arab East which was seized in the 1967 Middle East war and "annexed." Both back Jewish development of East Jerusalem.

But Mr. Kollek says that for the sake of peace, Arabs and Jews should live in separate areas. Mr. Olmert says Jews should be allowed to live anywhere and his party has angered Arabs by settling Jews in the heart of their neighbourhoods.

In the last city election five years ago, at the peak of the Palestinian uprising, fewer than 3,000 of the 80,000 eligible Arab voters cast ballots in East Jerusalem. This time Mr. Kollek's campaign aides hope more will come out for their man.

Despite the candidates' obvious differences, their campaign has focused largely on questions about Mr. Kollek's age and Mr. Olmert's character.

Mr. Kollek, using a lion as his campaign symbol, has revived allegations that Mr. Olmert exploited his political position for financial gain.

Lebanon launches company to rebuild heart of Beirut

By Peter Smerdon
Reuters

BEIRUT — A \$1.8-billion company is being launched to rebuild Beirut's war-shattered heart in what is billed as the largest urban redevelopment project in the world this decade.

The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut central district, known by its French acronym Solidere, begins a public share offering on Tuesday.

With the \$650 million it hopes to raise, Solidere plans to build hotels, offices, seaside parks and tree-lined walks to replace a swathe of shell-holed city blocks and overgrown streets dividing the city shattered by over a decade of civil war.

"Success will make it possible for other companies to do the same and it will be another sign of confidence in Lebanon," Nasser Chamara, Solidere's secretary general, said.

Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri says his dream of the Middle East, after Arab-Israeli peace is concluded, is of a region where the only conflict is competition among businesses — with Beirut as a business hub.

But critics say the much-vaunted plan is a front for the powerful, led by the billionaire Hariri, to make new fortunes out of at best reducing the centre to a concrete jungle jammed with traffic.

They say the company, as the only government-approved project, has trampled on landowners' rights.

"People in power are using their power to achieve personal gains," says Henri Eddé, an architect and former minister of public works who drew up a plan for redeveloping the city centre but left the project when his blueprint was changed.

"The plan was originally a means to organise the downtown. Now it has become a plan for real estate speculation," he says.

Mr. Hariri, with an estimated fortune of \$3 billion from banking and construction, says he will invest only as much as needed to encourage other people to take part. Mr. Chamara denies Solidere

may suffer from Middle East investors looking for other opportunities in the region amid the rising hopes of an end to the whole Arab-Israeli conflict next year.

On the contrary he says Solidere, the first share offering in Lebanon since the end of 15 years of civil war in 1990, is the first big project ready for investment boosted by peace.

"The peace process will provide opportunities for everybody. Beirut now is the best project on offer and we will be in a good position to take advantage of the fruits of the peace process."

"If investors assess this as a good project they will put money into it as it will be launched very soon. Then other investments perhaps in a year's time in Gaza-Jericho may come along," he told Reuters.

Solidere's own pitch is decidedly upbeat about Beirut's prospects.

"Beirut: An ancient city of the future," read the T-shirt on sale at the starkly modernist glass-and-metal Solidere booth set incongruously amid the dust and the ruins of Martyrs Square.

Solidere's publicity campaign includes posters proclaiming: "Beirut is for you, ask about it," to which the critics have coined the counter-slogan: "Beirut is for us, leave it alone."

The key to Solidere is what it describes as an "ingenious solution" to the problem of the differing demands of 150,000 Lebanese who either own real estate in the city centre or had rights to it as tenants when the war broke out in 1975.

In exchange for their land and rights as tenants valued by a state-appointed committee at \$1.17 billion they will receive 65 per cent of the company in the form of 11.7 million (a) shares.

Those at odds with the rebuilding programme or who want to retain their land rather than have to buy it back at half the value price are the most strident opponents of the company. But most admit they have virtually no chance of stopping Solidere.

The project covers a total land area of 1.6 million square metres and plans to develop a built-up area of 4.4 million square metres of floor space according to market conditions.

Jailhouse fame for Egypt's musical gunman

By Samia Nakhoul and
Mona Eltahawy
Reuters

CAIRO — Egyptians are flocking to buy Sabar Abu Al Ala's latest album, not so much to hear his golden voice but to listen to the man who shot dead two Americans and a Frenchman in a five-star hotel.

The 28-year-old singer, whose summer album release went largely unnoticed, has shot into the limelight since the shooting — the bloodiest single attack on foreign visitors in recent Egyptian history.

The authorities, fighting a Muslim fundamentalist campaign to topple President Hosni Mubarak's government, dismiss Mr. Abu Al Ala as a madman acting on the spur of the moment.

His family agree, but medical sources, quoting some of the victims, say there is evidence to suggest the attack was carefully planned.

Doctor Sherif Zaghloul, a surgeon at Al Salam Hospital who treated Syrian lawyer Mohammad Al Akkad and American Merrill Kramer, said the two men believed Mr. Abu Al Ala was carrying out a pre-planned attack.

"Mr. Akkad said the man did not behave like a crazy person and seemed to be doing something planned. The American said the man knew what he was doing," Mr. Zaghloul told Reuters.

Mr. Abu Al Ala entered a restaurant in the Semiramis hotel on Tuesday and shot foreign visitors one by one as they ate dinner. Two Americans and a French legal expert died. The restaurant was packed with foreign lawyers from a conference on penal law.

Mr. Akkad had bullet wounds to the arm, chest and abdomen. Mr. Kramer, 39, was hit in the chest and thigh. An Italian and an Egyptian were also wounded.

Officials issued a flurry of statements portraying Mr. Abu Al Ala as a failed musician with a history of mental illness and denying any link to Muslim militants waging a campaign against foreigners which has hit Egypt's lifeblood tourist industry.

Egyptian security forces guard Mr. Akkad's room and bar journalists from seeing for contacting him by telephone.

But Mr. Zaghloul quoted Mr. Akkad as saying that he heard someone with an Egyptian

accent telling the gunman to "finish off with them." Mr. Akkad, who played dead, also said he heard the gunman scream Islamic slogans.

Some guests at the hotel said Mr. Abu Al Ala shouted "Allahu Akbar" as he fired. Police said he raved about Serbian aggression in Bosnia.

Mr. Zaghloul said Mr. Kramer did not understand what the gunman shouted but he insisted the man knew what he was doing. He quoted Mr. Kramer, as saying: "It was deliberate and planned. It was not a spontaneous and random attack or because he was insane."

Diplomats at the American embassy say they are still trying to find out from the hotel and security networks what happened. Officers from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) interrogated Mr. Kramer before he was flown to Germany two days ago. "There are certain reports that we are considering," one diplomat said.

The Syrian embassy, which questioned Mr. Akkad, refused to give details. They said his comments to the doctor and a western newspaper were made when he was still ill. "You have to accept the

government's version," one Syrian diplomat said.

Mr. Akkad's wife Umaya, who was having dinner with her husband and six Syrian and Jordanian friends, declined to confirm or deny her husband's account. "I was shaking. I did not hear anything. People were shouting and screaming," she told Reuters.

Sales of Mr. Abu Al Ala's music have, meanwhile, soared.

Khaled Abdul Salam, who runs a tape shop in downtown Cairo, has put copies of the album, previously consigned to the storeroom because of poor sales, alongside Arabic pop music stars such as Warda and the latest songs from George Michael. "I was surprised that some people wanted to hear him," he said.

Another music shop owner, asked for a copy of the album by a local photographer, told her it had already sold out. "Do you all want to buy it now?" he asked of the tape, which is being played at parties around town.

Egyptians are eager to know all they can about the man portrayed on the album cover with a denim jacket carelessly draped across one

shoulder and a tomboyish woman leaning on the other. Egyptians, their keen curiosity about crimes in general fed by luridly reported crime pages in all newspapers, avidly read juicy details of criminals' private lives.

Mr. Abdul Salam said Mr. Abu Al Ala and his partner on the album, an Algerian singer called Shiraz, visited his shop in the summer to check on the turnover of their album's sales. But he recalled Mr. Abu Al Ala as "very ordinary and polite."

Photographs of Mr. Abu Al Ala have dominated front pages of Egypt's newspapers since his arrest after the attack. Headlines describe him as a "butcher," "terrorist" and "psychopath."

But his fame is likely to be short-lived.

"It's not worth talking about him," said Shazli Al Enaini, a teacher. "Someone as insignificant as him, who could do something like this, doesn't deserve all this attention."

Galal Abdul Haq, a record producer, commented: "People won't sympathise with him because what he did will have political repercussions abroad, it will affect tourism."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Le Monde Sous Marin
18:30	Beaumont
19:00	News in French
19:15	Varities
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
21:10	"Night Court"
21:30	The Magical World of Disney
22:00	News in English
22:30	Feature Film: "Keeper of the Flame"
PRAYER TIMES	
04:30	Fajr
05:00	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:30	Dhuhr
16:25	"Asr
16:50	Maghrib
18:00	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 810740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622666	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 622726	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy to cloudy and relatively cold. Thunderous showers will fall and winds will be northwesterly moderate to active. In Asala, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of showers; winds will be southerly moderate and seas calm.	
Amman: Min./Max. temp. 10/15	
Aqaba: 12/21	
Desert: 11/18	
Jordan Valley: 17/23	
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 17.5, Aqaba 23. Humidity readings: Amman 87 per cent, Aqaba 70 per cent.	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Raed Mawri	794788
Dr. Khalil Al Jibali	740740
Dr. Mohammad Omran	612232
Dr. Salah Al Oud	649028
Firas pharmacy	681912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asama pharmacy	637055
Neirouth pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shneissat pharmacy	637660
Natrouth pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
DRBID:	
Dr. Faysal Al Oadi	248743
Alquda pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Yousef Abu Sa'd	989000
Khalifah pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate Response	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	659000
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	787111
Overseas Calls	012230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	660100

HOSPITALS

Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	06-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalil Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Akshid Maternity, J. Amn.	644281/6
Jabal Amman Maternity	642342
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsani	664171/4
Shamsani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843845
Al-Musharraf Hospital	667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali	661275/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali	77101/3
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	664164/6
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah	775112/6
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	866100
Amal Hospital	074155
ZARQA:	
Zargo Govt. Hospital	09183323
Zargo National Hospital	09190560

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
05:10	Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:35	Damascus (RJ)
07:45	Dubai (AZ)
09:10	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:25	Aqaba (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
16:45	Rome (AZ)
18:00	Paris, Beirut (AP)
20:30	Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
20:55	Bucharest (RO)

HIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fits per kg.

Apple	300/250
Banana	480
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Beans	560/400
Cabbage	150/100
Carrot	260/220
Cauliflower	120/80
Celentianki	200/120
Cucumbers (large)	130/80
Cucumber (small)	120/80
Eggplant	280/230
Garlic	900/600
Grapes	350/340
Green pepper	120/100
Gruva	450/330
Lemon	170/100
Onion (large)	120/100
Marrow (small)	250/130
Mulshiki	300/200
Olives (green)	480/380
Onion (big)	220/160
Pepper (hot)	180/100
Pepper (sweet)	180/100
Pomegranate	380/300
Potato	350/280
Tomato	700/380

Candidate withdraws in favour of woman contender

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Third District Circassian candidate Monday withdrew from the elections, in favour of a Circassian woman candidate.

Kamal Jallouqa announced in a press conference that he stepped aside to give candidate Janet Mufti a better chance at winning the district's Circassian seat in parliament.

"A group of people came to me from Ms. Mufti's camp and asked me to step aside to increase her chances of winning the elections, thus making her the first woman to serve in the (Lower House of) Parliament, so I decided to withdraw," said Mr. Jallouqa.

The 45-year-old engineer added that he realised after several contacts with the public that people were sym-



Kamal Jallouqa

pathetic towards seeing a woman in the Lower House. "Since there was only one Circassian seat, and two women and two men were competing for it, I thought it

was important to unite the votes and withdraw to give a chance to another candidate, especially that the Circassian votes are limited," he said.

If Ms. Mufti wins, said Mr. Jallouqa, it will be a source of pride to all Circassians.

"It will be an honour for us if a Circassian woman makes it to Parliament," said Mr. Jallouqa.

He said he expected most of his supporters to vote for Ms. Mufti, because, he said, there were several basic issues in common between him and Ms. Mufti.

"I think most of the votes I collected from my campaign will go to Ms. Mufti, and my role is to explain her credentials," he added.

Ms. Mufti later told the Jordan Times that she was not planning to ask Mr. Jallouqa to withdraw his candidacy, but a group of her supporters mediated in her

favour and requested Mr. Jallouqa to step aside.

"I didn't know about it, but when I knew he agreed to step aside, I went and thanked him personally," she said.

The Circassian candidate said she was delighted with Mr. Jallouqa's decision which is going to serve her interests.

"I was very happy with Mr. Jallouqa's initiative," she said, adding that the votes she will gain from withdrawal will increase her chances of winning.

She said that Mr. Jallouqa's courageous move proved that he supports women and is willing to vote in favour of women.

Mr. Jallouqa said that he would run for parliament next time, and be stressed that his move was made only to serve the public interest and to unify ranks.

Unemployment down to 11% — Majali

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The unemployment rate, which had been hovering around 15 per cent recently, has declined considerably, according to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, the rate currently stands at about 11 per cent.

Dr. Majali, speaking during a meeting with the Zarga governorate's Executive Council, said unemployment in the Kingdom was reduced as a result of increased employment of Jordanians in Arab Gulf markets and from the absorption of more workers in local industries.

The announcement of the lower unemployment rate came as a surprise to many people but, according to Ministry of Labour Secretary Gen-

eral Saleh Al Tarawneh, the figure should be taken as an official indicator of the labour market.

"Since the figure was given by the prime minister, then we have to go by it," he told the Jordan Times Monday evening.

Mr. Tarawneh said he could not provide any numerical details.

However, Mr. Tarawneh pointed out that many Jordanians were finding work in Arab Gulf markets, but such news were not being published because of political reasons.

"Newspapers daily publish many ads of job opportunities in the Gulf, and that clearly shows that the markets there are taking Jordanian workers," the secretary general asserted.

Moreover, he said, the Kingdom's industrial progress,

especially at the industrial cities, and construction activity were absorbing large numbers of the unemployed.

Mr. Tarawneh explained that Jordanians had traditionally sought the government service to secure a pension in future years, but nowadays, they are moving to the private sector which provides similar, if not better, income and a social security umbrella.

Economic writer and analyst Faded Al Fanek said Jordan had no system to measure unemployment and, as such, views differ on the issue. Dr. Fanek was careful, however, not to disagree with the prime minister, saying the government must have had its own explanation for putting unemployment at 11 per cent.

Fanek said unemployment has undoubtedly declined although the rate might be higher than what the government specifies.

He said that 45,000 workers came for the first time under the umbrella of the Social Security Corporation (SSC) last year, and when the number is seen against the annual 30,000 newcomers to the labour market, the reduction becomes evident.

Dr. Fanek said the majority of the unemployed were being taken by the local market activity as he saw no change in the number of those who are employed in Gulf countries.

"The number of those finding jobs in the Gulf offsets the number of those who are coming back and therefore the Gulf markets should not carry much weight," he said.

Election hopefuls respond to issue-oriented questions

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Appeals to special interest groups were swept aside as more concrete political discussion about issues as varied as national identity, the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank accords and the Arab-Israeli peace process surfaced when a group of candidates vied for the votes of some 400 people attending an election debate Sunday evening.

Rather candid and unprovocative introductory comments by Third District candidate Janet Mufti, Riad Shakkah, Mansour Murad and Abdul Fatah Toukan and First District contender Azmi Khawaja came to an end when the audience began a lively question and answer session.

Mr. Toukan was the odd person out in the discussion as a result of his distinctly pro status quo views. Of the five candidates, he was the only one who unequivocally supported the one-person one-vote formula, the peace process, the IMF accord and was the only candidate who said he would "absolutely" give a vote of confidence to the current government if he were elected to the Lower House of Parliament.

He was subsequently

jeered by the audience, but insisted on his stand.

Meanwhile Janet Mufti, one of two speakers Sunday who is running for the sole Circassian seat in the Third District, took a more populist stand on nationalist political issues.

"I will cut my hand rather than shake the hand of Israel," said Ms. Mufti repeating the phrase her father, Said Mufti, coined when he served as Jordan's Prime Minister in the 1950s.

Concentrating on women's rights, Ms. Mufti said she would lobby to have existing charters and laws implemented to improve conditions of women in the country. Economically, she said, she saw no immediate alternative to the IMF/World Bank debt restructuring programmes that had already been "imposed" on Jordan, but said she would welcome a viable alternative.

Both Mansour Murad, one of Ms. Mufti's two rivals for the Circassian seat, (see story above) and Azmi Khawaja, who heads the Jordan Democratic Popular Party, said that Sudan's refusal to go along with IMF/World Bank programmes have worked out to be exemplary. Citing wheat and meat exports, the two candidates implied that Jor-

dan had the option to follow the Sudanese example.

Both candidates lamented that the Parliament had no role in drawing up economic, political or social programmes of the current government and said they would refrain from giving any government a vote of confidence if they, as parliamentarians, were not involved in the drafting of national policies.

Mr. Khawaja and Mr. Murad attacked the peace process questioning not only the viability of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel agreement but the Jordanian-Israeli agenda as well.

"We were never asked," said Mr. Murad, who is running for a second term in the Lower House.

In contrast, Riad al Shakkah veiled his support for the status quo.

Responding to a question put to each debater, on whether the candidate would give a vote of confidence to the current government, he said that he would not give any government a vote of confidence until he studied its programme and thus be avoided answering a direct yes or no.

Mr. Shakkah, who served as Minister of Justice under former Prime Minister Zeid



Rifai, also said that at the moment there was no alternative to the IMF accords.

He won much applause from the audience for an emotional pledge of allegiance to Jordan. "You ask me whether I am Jordanian or Palestinian, I am both. If I were not loyal to Nabulus and Palestine — I could not be loyal to Jordan — those who are not proud of their origins cannot be proud of anything," Mr. Shakkah told the crowd who awarded him loudest applause of the evening for this statement.

Mr. Azmi Khawaja, a veteran political activist, answered whether he was Jordanian or Palestinian by saying — "you should be ashamed to ask such insulting simpleton questions."

But it was questions about Mr. Shakkah's activities as a minister in the government of Zeid Rifai that were "the hottest" of the evening.

"I challenge anyone to prove that there was any wrongdoing or any mismanagement during my term in the Zeid Rifai Cabinet," Mr. Shakkah told the crowd. "I take full responsibility for all my actions and if I had wronged, I would not be running as a people's representative now."

British envoy stresses need for international support for Jordan's role in Middle East peace process

1 NOVEMBER 1993

FORTE GRAND HOTEL



Minister of Water and Irrigation Bassam Kakish (left), Tawfik Kawar of Amin Kawar & Sons (centre) and British Ambassador to Jordan Peter Hinchcliffe at the "Jordan Infrastructure Development" seminar held Monday (Petra photo)

development. The participating firms, he added, would like to familiarise themselves with the investment opportunities and climate in the Kingdom before taking further steps.

Organised by the British Embassy in cooperation with Jordanian and British firms, the seminar reviewed several working papers related to

Jordanian development.

One of the papers was presented by Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary General Abdul Wahab Al Zubi, who outlined the ministry's energy plans and Jordan's existing deals with foreign oil companies to prospect for oil in the Kingdom.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Bassam Kakish spoke about the water issues of Jordan noting that the ministry was cooperating with two foreign firms to develop the country's water resources.

Other speakers included Jamal Amireh from the Arab Potash Company (APC), Ishaq Jallad from the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and Nabii Annari from the Ministry of Planning.

Ministry regulates presence of candidates' agents on Nov. 8

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad Sunday requested district and provincial governors to provide him with the list of candidates' representatives who will monitor voting and counting of ballots on polling day.

Regulations issued Monday, by the ministry requested that only one representative for each candidate be assigned at every voting centre in accordance with Articles 40 and 50 of the Elections Law.

Representatives will have a special card bearing the seal of

the constituency and signed by its president. The regulations also ban the representatives from moving for one voting centre to another, but candidates themselves can.

The Public Security Department (PSD) will be providing security in and around the voting centres until the early hours of Nov. 9 to ensure the safety and security of voters during the polling process. About 19,000 security officers will be deployed at voting centres around the Kingdom.

Intermittent rain expected until noon Wednesday

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Following the thunderstorms which hit Amman and the central parts of the Kingdom early Monday, the Department of Meteorology expects intermittent rain until noon Wednesday.

A department spokesman told the Jordan Times that the Kingdom will continue to be affected by a mass of cold air from northeastern Europe caused by a depression centered over the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

The weather over Jordan will be cloudy and rainy at times, with intermittent thun-

derstorms, said the spokesman.

Temperatures will not rise above 19°C Tuesday, dropping to a low of 9°C at night in the Amman region, he said.

The spokesman said that the southeastern regions of the Kingdom will be affected by sandstorms causing poor visibility, and in Aqaba there will be thunder showers with the southeasterly winds causing choppy seas.

A department statement showed that up to noon Monday, Amman's Marka airport and other district of Kura in the north received nearly 22 millimetres of rain.



Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Monday attends a meeting in which a formal document was signed recognising the Brooks Hospital for Animals branch in Amman (Petra photo)

Brooks Hospital for Animals formally opens Amman branch

AMMAN (J.T.) — The London-based Brooks Hospital for Animals Monday formally opened an office in Amman to provide free veterinary services to care for horses, mainly those used in transporting tourists through the ancient city of Petra.

The hospital, a charitable society, has been operating in Jordan since 1985 under the sponsorship of Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein, offering assistance to horse owners and caring for the sick animals, said Abdullah Khalil, a lawyer representing Brooks Hospital, in a statement to the Jordan Times.

Mr. Khalil, who signed agreement for the official recognition of the society branch in Jordan with Minister of So-

cial Development Mohammad Sqour, in the presence of Princess Alia, said the society will try to offer better services by employing mobile clinics.

According to Mr. Khalil, the British society supplied a mobile clinic a few years ago to help the Jordanian branch. There are now plans to supply a second mobile clinic to cope with the expected increase in the demand for veterinary services.

The mobile units, supplied free of charge by the society, will travel through the Petra area and the neighbouring districts of Wadi Mousa, Wadi Rum and Aqaba, said Mr. Khalil.

He added that Jordanian veterinarians will also advise

horse owners on how to care for their animals.

The society also offers cash to horse owners if their animals die because these horses are the source of the owners' livelihood, said Mr. Khalil.

In addition, he said, the society offers loans to help purchase younger horses and organises lectures on how to care for animals.

Dr. Sqour said the signing ceremony that the ministry will give the British society facilities to ensure the success of its work.

According to Dr. Sqour, the society plans to replace the old horses used in the Petra tourism sector with younger ones and employ more veterinarians.

PSD chief reviews anti-drug efforts with visiting U.N. team

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department (PSD) Director General-Major Abdul Rahman Al Udwan Monday met with a visiting U.N. delegation representing the world body's anti-narcotics agency.

Maj-Gen. Udwan said Jordan currently implements a national plan for combating drug trafficking and treating drug addicts.

He explained that in view of its central geographical location, the Kingdom is being used by traffickers as a passage way between countries that produce and those that consume the drugs.

He also outlined the measures taken to protect the local community from the dangers of drugs.

Earlier, the two-member U.N. team called on Interior Minister Salameh Hammad to discuss U.N.-Jordanian cooperation in combating illicit drug operations.

Discussion covered Jordan's needs in this area of concern and means of promoting the national strategy against drugs. The U.N. team said that their agency is prepared to train Jordanian personnel in the fight against drugs.

Oakley

(Continued from page 1) mad Farab Aided said he will talk to a five-member group from the faction.

Mr. Oakley, a former ambassador here, is coming back to try to mediate political solution to the Somali problem, three weeks after Washington abandoned efforts to snatch Gen. Aided.

He is scheduled to address a news conference here on Wednesday, after meeting several clan leaders.



A poster for the ramp safety campaign at Arab airports which began Monday

Arab airports begin ramp safety campaign

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Arab Air Carriers Organisation (AACO) "Ramp Safety Campaign 1993" started Monday at the Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) with the participation of personnel from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Royal Jordanian (RJ) and the Civil Defence Department (CDD).

Held this year under the slogan: "Ramp Safety Starts with the Human Factor," the campaign is being launched simultaneously at all Arab airports and will last one month, according to Mutaseem Kilani who is in charge of RJ's Opera-

tions Department. Mr. Kilani said the campaign, which is an annual event, aims at further orienting airport personnel on safety precautions and maintaining clean runways and tarmacs.

He said that the programme this year will also focus on measures to be taken in case of emergencies and accidents that could affect air traffic.

Organised by RJ in cooperation with AACO, the campaign will entail several seminars at QAIA and visits to airport facilities among other functions.

CONDOLENCES

The editor and staff of the Jordan Times deeply mourn the passing, at the age of 83, of **Mellie Halabi Atalla**

grandmother of our friend and colleague Ian Atalla and friend and former colleague Rania Atalla.

May her soul rest in peace.

Handwritten note in Arabic: "هذا من ليلى"

Jordan Times

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MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 661242

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Hard facts, one goal

THE PROJECTED meeting of the higher Jordanian-Palestinian committee in Amman next week offers yet another opportunity to put the Palestinian-Jordanian relations on track. There has been considerable rhetoric lately, both positive and negative about the future coordination and cooperation between the two sides, especially in the wake of the eventual implementation of the Gaza-Jericho first accord between Israel and the PLO. Now it is time to set aside this rhetoric and proceed with well-intentioned synchronisation of positions, based on clarity and foresight. And now that Jordan has made it clear to all sides that it will not be intimidated or brushed aside, the PLO can straighten up its contacts with the Jordanian side on all levels. As is, the future of the area is still shrouded by uncertainty, not to mention ill feeling, that awaits resolution one way or another.

The events of the last few weeks have proven that Jordan's stance on the peace talks with Israel is absolutely right. This vindication of the country's posture came on the heels of earlier evidence that the concerns of the Kingdom are right, especially with regard to the need for greater and deeper understanding between the PLO and Jordan. Since no less than PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali will preside over the meeting, there is sufficient basis for optimism that the omissions of the past can be addressed and even rectified in good faith.

Needless to point out that the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations are not exactly strewn with roses. There are many hurdles awaiting their peace discussions, most of which are security-related. It is obvious that the enemies of the PLO-Israeli accord are many and powerful. It is also clear that the Palestinian side cannot on its own handle the formidable security and political issues that awaits it. Not too long ago, it has been observed that the two banks of the River Jordan are but the two lungs by which peace between Israel and the Arab side can have a chance to breathe. This awareness is all the more fitting now that the hard facts associated with the PLO-Israeli peace parleys appear to stalemate their progress on several fronts. There is nothing that would please both the Jordanian and the Palestinian peoples than to see their representatives acting in concert and in good faith for a change.

The future of the two peoples is interlocked no matter what some elements attempt to think of them. We Jordanians can be expected to do our part to bring the two camps closer to acceptable harmony and cooperation. His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly underscored the inevitability and indispensability of brotherly relations between the two Arab peoples. In the same vein, the Monarch has emphasised the commitment of Jordan to all Jordanians, no matter where they come from or go to. This principled position should set the stage for a new, clean slate as far as the future of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Jordanians in the East Bank. Gone are the complexes and immunities that often haunted the relationship between the two peoples. The atmosphere cannot be cleared any more only by the Jordanian side. Now it is up to the PLO also to make things clear for all concerned, including its own people. Whoever fails the Jordanians and the Palestinians in the crucial period that lies ahead has to assume total responsibility for it.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily was strongly critical of the huge number of candidates running for the Nov. 8 elections, noting that the majority are not politicians, notable personalities or representatives of political parties. Describing the big number of advertisement in the press and the flood of banners filling the streets of the Kingdom's cities as a circus, Tareq Masarweh said that these candidates have no right to ask the public for support as they are very little known and they offer no programmes for their future work in Parliament in case they are elected. It is true that the Interior Ministry has no power to curtail the number of candidates, but the voters themselves have the right to choose only those candidates who they believe are able to do good service to the country and their countrymen, added the writer. The voters ought to choose those candidates who announce a national programme and who in the past have proved their stand and their commitment to work for the country and for the local community, called the writer. The writer said that Jordan does not lack eligible and qualified men and women who can serve the country and the interests of the voters through the legislative branch of government. He said that the public ought to be introduced to the voters so that they can decide whether they are qualified to represent them in Parliament or not and whether they are politically oriented for such an important position.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour daily warned the Palestinian people against allowing hostile elements to tamper with their unity and their just struggle to attain their rights. Saleh Qallab said that the assassinations of Safawi and other Palestinian leaders in Gaza and the West Bank bear the signs of a conspiracy and could trigger a civil strife that would end the dreams of freedom of the Palestinian people. A civil war which only serves the ends of the enemies of the Palestinian people would be the deadly weapon that would destroy any hope for the Palestinian people for an independent state and freedom from occupation, stressed the writer. The killing of the Palestinian activists who had fought hard for peace following their struggle for freedom could pave the way for a Lebanese style or a Somali style civil strife that would benefit none of the factions vying for leadership nor fulfil the aspirations of the people whose objectives these parties are supposed to achieve, he added. The writer said that the Palestinian factions should not serve elements who operate in the dark and who seek to strengthen their own selfish position at the international level by sacrificing the interests and the souls of the Palestinians. The Palestinian people, he added, should not allow themselves to be misled by the empty slogans which can only serve the enemies of the Arab Nation.

The View from Fourth Circle

Palestine — an idea of goodness instead of disfigurement

By Rami G. Khouri

The renowned Palestinian scholar Edward Said has written a powerful criticism of the Israel-PLO agreement in the Arabic-language newspaper Al Hayat. One may agree or disagree with his substantive criticisms of the accord (I tend to agree with the points he makes, but I still feel the accord is the right way to proceed towards Palestinian and Arab rights). He notes, however, that perhaps more important than the accord itself is the challenge of nation-building that now faces the Palestinians, and all Arabs by extension.

It is a testament to Edward Said's humanism and brilliance that he helps us muster the broad vision required to venture into the uncharted landscape of new modes of Arab governance and statehood in the closing years of this century — a century that has been chronically unkind and unfair to this region and its people. Edward Said challenges us to avoid fighting yesterday's battle, to rid ourselves of the Arab penchant to wallow in the emotionalism and defeatism of the past and, instead, to grasp the opportunities that history has placed before this imperfect region, its contorted states and its beleaguered people.

Edward Said's challenge is epic in its historical context and audaciously herculean in its defiance of our dominant emotionalism. He writes: "After all the hoopla celebrating 'the first step towards a Palestinian state', we should remind ourselves that much more important than having a state is the kind of state it is. The modern history of the post-colonial

in retrospective nationalistic moaning to the exhilarating promise of resuscitating the political humanism and national vitality of our Arab/Islamic/Semitic societies. We now require vision, compassion, moral power and the diligence of men and women of great dreams. These forces are all within ourselves if we dare to unlock them — and if we are not bombed from the air by foreign powers waving United Nations resolutions while the unlocking is taking place.

The promise of limited Palestinian self-government in a transitional phase, under the eyes of Israeli guns and sentries, is patently humiliating and nonsensical if it is seen as a prize in itself. Those who focus narrowly on the land, people and resources that will fall under Palestinian quasi-jurisdiction in the coming few years are surrendering before the real battle has even started. Those who view Palestine as a new means of access to foreign money, or a convenient new conduit for economic penetration of the vast Middle Eastern commercial market — holy smokes, Joe, do you realise how many bottles of Coca Cola we can sell to 230 million thirsty Arabs? — are signing the documents of surrender in the greater war that defines the world today: the war between, on the one hand, communities of caring people who would dare to develop humane societies based on enduring moral and cultural values and, on the other hand, corporate conglomerates run by faceless managers whose religious devotion to profiteering and market penetration means they recognise neither national boundaries nor cultural sensitivities.

In this context, Palestine is not only the name of a strip of land inhabited by people with a cultural identity that is only very slightly different from their adjacent brothers and sisters in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and other corners of historical Bilad Ash Sham, or Greater Syria; within the 20th century's struggle for the self-determination of peoples and the dignified development of sensible and decent statehood in the South, Palestine takes on a far larger meaning.

The idea of Palestine for most of this century has been the idea of struggling against the lingering historical injustices of European and then American contempt for the people of the South. Now that the Palestinians have earned the first tangible bits of political recognition from Israel and the world's powers, I believe that the idea of Palestine must be seen once again in its full historical context: it is the idea that we — who are of and from this region, we Palestinians, Jordanians, Levantines, Syrians, Middle Easterners, Semites, Arabs, Muslims, Christians, Jews; choose any little label that you're comfortable with — we must build in Palestine a society that is a model of all that we believe in and stand for, a just and humane society that brings honour to who we are and what we represent, a society of which our parents and grandparents would be proud.

The opportunity to build new structures of Arab statehood is not one that comes very often. In most Arab countries, that opportunity has been largely wasted in the last century, bringing us to this moment in the closing years of the century when our region continues to be characterised by tension, extremism, militarism and the primitive, child-like political emotionalism of people seeking refuge in the warm and familiar chambers of their primordial identities of religion, family, tribe and other forms of reflexive, instinctive, non-rational and yet appealing, patriarchy. We hide under these protective wings because they are safe, they are available and they usually get us through the winter; some of the more politically crude amongst us also peek under the tiny tail feathers of narrow nationalism, that historical cheat that tries to replace our rich Arab/Islamic cultural identity with the fool's gold of our own little bit of geography.

Because we have ventured into this cruel world of nationalistic fantasy-states and regional fragility — dependent, fragmented, indebted, thirsty, intellectually provincial and increasing fearful of the truth that nudges us like the wind before a rainstorm — we continue to see our lands and our lives passed on like a baton from foreign emperor to emperor, and our fate mortgaged to the sad deficiencies of Arab and other

local governance systems and power structures that are more often than not silent partners and co-signatories with the emperors we bemoan. Our "disfigured post-colonial world", in Edward Said's words, is a reality that we suffer, but it is also a reality that we struggle to rectify and to replace with something better.

The mangled, distorted modern Middle East is all that Palestine should not be, must not be, cannot be — if the Arab struggle of the last century is not to have been a brief hallucinatory diversion during our transition from geographical wastelands on Europe's imperial routes last century, to geological and commercial pitstops along the European-American-Pacific Rim race towards a perpetual global commercial jamboree this century. The opportunity to build a new society in Palestine on the wreckage of the old is a sacred trust that Palestinians hold in the name of all Arab people — and even beyond the confines of the Arab World.

This is an opportunity to close the sad chapter of colonial and imperial agony and of the South's staggering post-colonial stupor. This is an opportunity to affirm that the French colonialism of Algeria was wrong and that the Algerians' own autocratic self-colonisation was equally wrong. This is an opportunity to forge a more humane and rational model of statehood that is not fearful of its own people or so eccentrically possessive of bits of land that it forgets about the quality of life of the human beings who live on that land.

"The promise of limited Palestinian self-government in a transitional phase, under the eyes of Israeli guns and sentries, is patently humiliating and nonsensical if it is seen as a prize in itself. Those who focus narrowly on the land, people and resources that will fall under Palestinian quasi-jurisdiction in the coming few years are surrendering before the real battle has even started."

These are large orders, perhaps impossible dreams. They are certainly unusual in the modern Middle East, but I am convinced that they are possible if the Palestinians — and the Arabs and Israelis next door — muster the vision that is necessary to transcend the temptations of the global dog food empire that beckons them into the enchanted forest of endless soft drinks and television entertainment; instead, we who are of and from this region, along with like-minded decent people throughout the rest of the world, should grasp the opportunity of the birth of Palestine to walk together on a very different path of humane national development.

Palestine may be one of the few chances available to the world to make this choice. A census, an election, yes and yes again; even an identity card, a library card, a driving license and then a passport for every Palestinian: how appropriate it would be if this opportunity for Palestinian rebirth were also to be an opportunity for a more global process of humanism and decency. It would be fitting indeed that the land that gave the world a model of monotheistic, codified morality in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions thousands of years ago would today provide the world with a fresh model of nationhood that is — like those religions — a beacon of how good we can be when we set our minds to it.

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M. KAHIL



Russia changed for good after revolt

By Martin Nesirky
Reuter

MOSCOW — A month after hardliners launched an abortive revolt against President Boris Yeltsin, Moscow's battle-blackened White House parliament is turning white again but Russia has changed irrevocably.

Russia's first post-communist election six weeks away, two dozen political groupings are campaigning. Mr. Yeltsin has tightened his grip on the huge federation's 88 diverse regions and republics and has decreed important economic reforms.

Even Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin could be evicted from his Red Square mausoleum, a communist shrine.

On Sunday, October 3 — four weeks ago — thousands of communist and nationalist supporters of the dissolved Soviet-era parliament surged through Moscow's streets and dozens died when they tried to storm the Ostankino television centre.

The next morning, Mr. Yel-

sin replied by sending in tanks and troops to blast the White House defenders into submission. Dozens more died as shells pocked the building's imposing facade and fires scorched the upper floors.

Now foreign and Russian workers have cleaned almost all the riverside building's blackened areas with water jets and are on the way to repairing shattered windows and stonework.

Mr. Yeltsin is determined to return the building to its original state as soon as possible to remove the symbolic value of battle damage for his opponents, whose ringleaders are in jail awaiting trial on charges that carry a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

The president, eager to press on with reforms, has been as determined to capitalise on his strengthened position by ordering elections for new local councils. Some old-style Soviets (councils) have resisted his reforms.

To help bring the regions to heel, Mr. Yeltsin has also told them to pay taxes they owe or risk losing funds from Moscow.

As part of his attempt to sweep aside the vestiges of Bolshevik rule, he has called a referendum on a post-communist constitution for Dec. 12, the same day as the vote for the new two-chamber Russian legislature.

Russia will also gradually get a jury system to replace the communist-inspired and manipulative method of a judge and two lay assessors.

One of Mr. Yeltsin's most dramatic economic decrees has been to allow land to be bought and sold after 70 years of state ownership. But the economy remains in crisis, with double-digit monthly inflation and a huge budget deficit.

The government has also decided to do away with bread subsidies and ordered hundreds of loss-making state enterprises to pay off their debts or face bankruptcy.

Emergent political parties and election blocs offer differing views or alternatives to Mr. Yeltsin's policies. Party workers spent the weekend gathering the 100,000 signatures each grouping needs to be registered next month for the poll.

Some blocs say Mr. Yeltsin

supporters, primarily ministers and aides in the group Russia's choice, have an unfair advantage in media coverage ahead of the vote. Mr. Yeltsin has ordered a special court to be set up to try to ensure equal coverage and access.

While some diehard communists who wistfully dream of the old days have said they will boycott the vote and some fascist groups are banned, other communists and ardent nationalists plan to stand.

Many of Russia's 150 million people profess indifference toward the election so far and plenty of voters have yet to make up their minds about who to back.

Mr. Yeltsin may have changed Russia for good, but his vision of the future is at least partly inspired by Russia's past.

His only domestic trip outside Moscow since the uprising has been to the ancient town of Yaroslavl, where he vowed to emulate an 11th-century prince who gave Russia its first written law.

"Soviet power is over," he said. "We should be worthy heirs to our ancestors."

LETTERS

Matters of priority

To the Editor:

With regard to the letter "Deadly custom" (Jordan Times, Oct. 27, 1993) in which the author tackles the effects of cigarette smoke on our lives, I believe that it would be more pertinent to publish letters that address more pressing matters such as the daily pollution that we are all exposed to.

Or is no one interested?

Kamel M. Kattan,
Amman.

Satire not disloyalty

To the Editor:

I would only like to point out that the famous and great American comedian, Carol Burnett, performed a hilarious satire against secretaries a few years back. No one accused her of being sexist, nor anti-American at the time, nor did anyone mention the American Constitution or the Declaration of Independence as being under attack because of her show.

If I offended the Jordanian women, whom I deeply admire, respect and love, then I offer my most humble apologies; for those who know me well understand my feelings towards all citizens of our beloved Kingdom of Jordan. Many of my female friends are very well educated and a great asset to our country. Some of my friends are themselves secretaries. My column was never intended for them or for any other conscientious secretary, of which there are many, I am sure. But too, there are a great deal of secretaries who tend to get on many people's nerves, including myself and quite a few of my acquaintances; hence, the story about Myrtle the Turtle in my article "The infamous secretary" (Jordan Times, Oct. 21-22, 1993).

But then making fun of a weakness that exists within society has nothing to do with our National Charter, our national policy or Jordanian women in general and/or their education. I therefore fail to make the connection between all the above and what I said in my column. If only Ms. Hadidi, who is entitled to her opinions, could be more open minded, then perhaps after bravely "wading through" my infuriating column, she could have laughed (my main intention), instead of rushing to the defence of the future of the nation which does not seem to have been at stake at all.

If criticising a social institution which might even be a universal problem, makes a writer bear the label unpatriotic or disloyal to his or her country, then we had better take a sharp look at ourselves. Excessive praise of ourselves and patting on the shoulder all the time gets us nowhere at all.

E. Yaghi,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



Fakhri Kavar
Yacoub Zayadin

Third District — acid test

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan Times contend that if one of the female candidates withdrew in favour of the other, "a woman will definitely win in this district." Some say Ms. Mufti has a greater chance of winning because "she enjoys the support of the majority of the Circassian community."

The race for the Christian seat will be a tough challenge. Much wheeling and dealing has gone into it, simply because many Christians are more interested in who will win the Muslim seats.

The Christian community in this district does care about who among its members will be elected, but the Christian voters are equally concerned about improving the chances of those Muslim candidates closest to them, namely Messrs Nabulsi, Abu Ragheb and Masri. Where many Christians will forego casting any ballot for a co-religionist in favour of voting for liberal Muslims, some Muslim voters will likewise support Christian candidates. This is where the battle will actually be decided, according to observers. For instance, the communist apparatchiks, whether Christian or Muslim, will vote for candidate Yacoub Zayadin, secretary-general of the Jordanian

Communist Party, who once represented Jerusalem in parliament although he hails from Karak.

Parliamentary hopeful Khalil Haddadin, on the other hand, will get votes from the Baathists, whether they are Christian or Muslim; just as fellow candidate Fakhri Kavar got much support from the Brotherhood and won the seat from Mr. Zayadin in 1989. The odds this time will be against Mr. Kavar, as much as they would be against the fourth strong contender for the Christian seat, George Haddad, because both would have expected support from the Islamists had the Election Law not been changed to the one-person, one-vote formula.

The strongest candidate for this seat would have easily been Salim Khaleelieh, had the Christians been in fact interested in voting on religious basis, the observers say. Mr. Khaleelieh, a former senior officer in the intelligence service, has claimed that he has the support of church leaders, being a member of the Council of Churches, but Christian leaders have privately disavowed this claim, leaving the eventual winner of the Christian seat to be chosen from the ranks of the four leftist and pan-Arabist front-runners.

Attacker worked in New York mosque

(Continued from page 1)

Israel.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted Mrs. Hajjat as condemning the attack that her husband perpetrated as a heinous crime.

"Is this jihad (holy war) he was talking about... does jihad mean Muslim's killing to his brother Muslim?" she asked.

Mrs. Hajjat expressed dissatisfaction over her husband's crime, which she attributed to "the religious extremism that has blinded him."

In an interview with Petra, Mrs. Hajjat recollected the recent events that had probably led to her husband's role in the attack.

She said that her husband, 29, had left for the United States in 1991 "in a suspicious manner," and was working as an assistant to an imam of the Al Farouk mosque.

Mrs. Hajjat, who said she got married to him in August 1993 after being engaged for four years, said that "signs of extremism" appeared in her husband's letters the following year to his stay in the U.S.

Last hostage released

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Kehir denied the front was involved in the latest kidnapping, other front officials in exile had urged the captives' release.

"Many armed groups act in their neighbourhoods or regions with barely any contact with the others," he said.

Still, Mr. Kehir said an exodus of foreigners would serve the front's cause "to the extent it isolates and weakens the regime and deprives it of resources."

He faulted the United Nations and Washington for a lack of pressure on the Algerian regime.

"In Haiti, the U.N. and United States fight to restore to power an elected president. In Algeria, on the other hand, they support a regime that interrupted a model electoral process because we were going to win. The yardstick isn't the same," he said.

Mr. Kehir claimed 25,000 people were jailed for political or religious reasons and said more than 3,000 people had died in the insurgency.

Justice Minister Mohammad Tegui said Sunday that the number of fundamentalists detained "for terrorist action does not surpass 5,000."

At a briefing for local reporters, reported by the official news agency APS, he said 5,000 was the maximum held for "terrorism" — the Algerian authorities' term for political violence by Muslim fundamentalists.

Snippets and tidbits from

Optimum vote-counting time, simple maths and dead people voting on election day

The 1993 elections campaign, serious as it appears, is not devoid of a light — sometimes funny — side. These are tidbits about news, views and comments about the campaign that will appear (hopefully) every day in this corner until it is all over on Nov. 8. Humour is intended in the column, in no way libel.

THE ISLAMIC Action Front (IAF), in a bid to ensure maximum utilisation of the tribal hase of its candidates, has apparently asked its committed members to vote after 2:00 p.m. on polling day. The idea being that its representa-

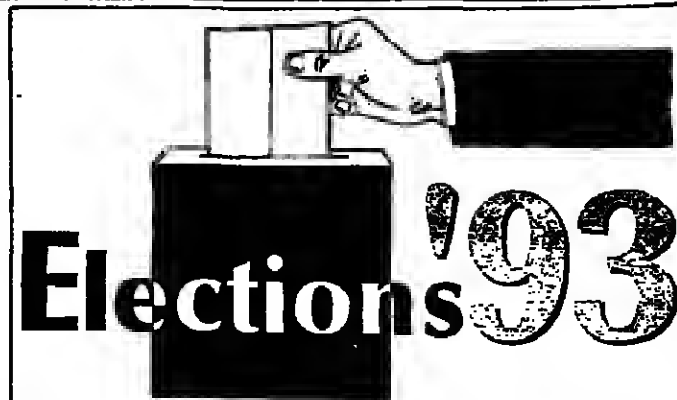
tives at the voting booths would be able to give a rough estimate of voting patterns before the IAF decides how many more votes their candidate would need in order to win. This is particularly important for them in areas where they have more than one candidate running since the waiting period would give them enough time to split the remaining vote. The catch is that some other campaign managers are already aware of the trick and asking their committed voters to wait also till after 2:00 p.m. to do essentially the same thing. With this being the case, independent voters would be

well-advised to vote before that time to avoid the voting rush, a pundit says.

WHILE IAF policy in tribal areas is one thing, its strategy in urban districts is totally another. In the latter areas, Islamist volunteers have been visiting homes and handing out voter cards along with the names of the candidate they should vote for. To keep their mathematics easy, the IAF is requesting women supporters to vote for one candidate and the men to vote for the other. So if in the end result one of the IAF candidates seems to have a higher turnout than his colleague, it would be due, presumably, to the male-female ratio, which is about 53 to 47 respectively, and not because one is less popular with the

women than the other.

THE LEFTIST-Islamist alliance may still influence the 1993 elections despite the change in the electoral system to one-person, one-vote. The main theory behind the government introducing change is to guard against vote bartering in the one district and end unlikely alliances which contributed to the strong Islamist showing in the last Parliament. But it appears that the leftists, who have so far failed to get their act together, have found a way to barter votes with the Islamists anyway. In one case, according to some sources, a leftist party in the Third District has accepted an offer from the IAF to support a friend of the front in that district and receive in



return the same number of votes in Irbid. Some unexplained results next Tuesday may be easily attributed to unlikely alliances, should other explanations fail of course.

THE JORDAN Times' Arabic sister, Al Ra'i, proves by the day that it can be a citadel of democracy, or, more accurately, the lack of it. A report by its parliamentary reporter bailed the minister of interior's decision to force people to bring an identity proof along with their voter card on Nov. 8. "It is another victory for democracy," the reporter, who was not exactly "reporting," said. "We in Al Ra'i have often pointed to this issue," he reminded

readers. And to better serve democracy, the writer suggests, "the identity proof should be stamped after the voter had cast his vote." "There should be a series of decisive steps that accompany this decision," he went on. But having said that about Al Ra'i, we should add that a campaigner for one of the candidates was especially troubled about the extra requirements of the Ministry of Interior "because I had the cards of about 20 dead people which I was going to use on the day of the elections." So the Ministry of Interior's measures might be democratic after all, and Al Ra'i even more so.

NERMEEN MURAD



Less affluent candidates use makeshift stores to hang their photos, like in the Bedouin Al Janon b District (left), or make their platform known on solid brick walls, like in Maan (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)



Israel tables pullout plan

(Continued from page 1)

to be negotiated at the Taba talks.

Jamil Tarifi, a senior Palestinian delegate to the Taba talks, said he held the Israeli government responsible for settlers' attacks on Palestinians.

"It is the responsibility of the Israeli government to keep them away from our people because they are protesting, they are destroying and burning and nobody can take the law between their own hands," Dr. Tarifi said.

Under the peace deal, the army pullout is due to be completed in both Jericho and Gaza by April.

Israel wants to confine West Bank self-rule to Jericho in the initial stage. It wants troops to guard Jewish settlements in the teeming Gaza Strip, where Arabs outnumber Jews by about 250 to one.

Palestinians want an expanded self-rule area around Jericho and eventual removal of the Gaza settlements.

For the Palestinians in the Taba talks, Colonel Nasser Yusef said a plan for a "withdrawal from all the Gaza Strip" was put forward and would be examined.

Mr. Gluska said withdrawal from the Jericho region, which has also been granted autonomy, would take place at a later date. The exact area for autonomy in the West Bank town still has to be defined.

The two delegations also discussed in a sub-committee the handover of authority to the

Palestinians, concentrating on financial and religious questions, said Dr. Tarifi.

"We did not see disagreement today," he said.

The two sides have until Dec. 13 to hammer out a deal on withdrawal and transfer of power for health, education, tourism, direct taxation and social welfare.

The setting up of a Palestinian police force and prisoner releases are also on the agenda at this fourth session of negotiations which started at this Red Sea resort on Oct. 13, the same day as the autonomy agreement came into effect.

Palestinian leaders have called for a police and security force up to 30,000 strong, but Israel envisages only about 10,000 men.

The two sides are even further apart on the issue of prisoner releases. The Palestinians want a general amnesty for the 11,000 still in jail. Israel freed 617 inmates last week but has tied further releases to progress in the negotiations and has ruled out freeing those who have committed "blood crimes."

Palestinian prisoners in two Israeli jails have pledged to go on hunger strike unless they are freed "very soon," a senior Palestinian source said.

The inmates pledged in a letter to Ali Jade, an aide of Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine leader George Hachash, that they would "launch a hunger strike, including refusing to drink, if they are not freed very soon."

Settlers continue rampage

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli officials suggested last week that under the autonomy deal settlements near major Palestinian centres of population could be dismantled.

Every day since Friday's killing of Beit El resident Haim Mizrahi, settlers have blocked roads with burning tyres and stoned Arab-owned cars and houses.

In another sign of defiance, eight settler families moved into homes in the settlement as squatters Monday.

The homes, like some 1,500 elsewhere in the West Bank, were begun during the construction boom under the previous right-wing government

and reluctantly completed by this administration, but not sold in order to slow the growth of the settler population.

"This is a test case," settler spokeswoman Aliza Herbst said of the squatters. If the government does not evict the families in Beit El, others would follow elsewhere, she said.

Today, about 125,000 settlers live among 1.8 million Palestinians in the occupied lands.

Mr. Rabin on Sunday fanned the flames by calling the settlers opponents of peace and citing their rampages in the same breath as Muslim zealots.

GIFTS FROM THE SEA...

& THE MARKET, TOO!

We make it happen for you

Iran devalues currency by nearly 2.5%

NICOSIA (R) — Iran devalued the rial by 2.46 per cent against the dollar Monday, days after the currency hit six-month lows on the open market.

The central bank posted the dollar at 1,629.625 rials, compared with 1,583.1585, a rate it had kept since July 25. The rates of other major currencies were changed similarly.

The devaluation followed decisions Saturday by the foreign exchange regulatory committee headed by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani tightening import regulations.

Mansour Farhoumand, a money dealer in Tehran, said the dollar was gaining in a confused market, reaching 1,652 rials in early afternoon after opening at 1,640.

The dollar was also rising in the rial market in Europe, where it has a premium of about 50 rials over the Tehran rate because transactions arranged abroad bypass the months-long delays normal in payments handled by Iranian banks.

"I bought dollars at 1,660 rials yesterday, but today can't find any at 1,690. It is very likely to go even higher," said Ali Pakpour, an Iranian money dealer in London.

There was no official statement on the devaluation, the first since April, which contrasted with repeated statements by central bank governor Mohammad Hossein Adeli that the fundamentals of Iran's economy supported a stronger rial.

Iran is dependent on crude oil exports for more than 80 per cent of its hard cash revenue and oil prices have been declining in recent weeks despite an output cut agreed by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries in September.

The regulatory committee decided Saturday that all imports should be registered through the commerce ministry.

It also ordered government affiliated enterprises not to go to the open market for their hard cash needs and said that state banks would provide all they want.

"I don't think they can deliver on this. Bank drafts issued three or four months ago are still not paid," Mr. Farhoumand said.

Iran has been facing a cash shortage since last year, forcing delays in foreign payments which have disrupted trade and created supply problems for import dependent industries.

Failure of Muramoto Construction Company marks biggest post-war bankruptcy in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — A respected Japanese building company has become the latest victim of Japan's bubble economy, declaring its insolvency with liabilities estimated at 590 billion yen (\$5.6 billion).

The failure of Muramoto Construction Co. Ltd., which filed for protection against creditors in the ancient capital of Nara Monday, marks the biggest bankruptcy in Japan's post-war history, surpassing the collapse of Sankei Steamship Co. in 1985 with liabilities of 520 billion yen.

Like many other construction and real-estate companies which got caught up in the speculative mania of the late 1980s, Muramoto got burned by golf-course development despite its 85 years' experience in the building industry.

Several of its banks, including Osaka-based Daiwa Bank

Ltd., had reported been trying to rehabilitate the unlisted company — which employs some 2,000 people and has 150 offices across Japan.

But Muramoto was forced to seek protection from Nara district court after creditors threatened to seize part of its headquarters, put up as a guarantee for a golf course development in Chiba prefecture east of Tokyo.

Teikoku Data Bank Ltd., a credit research company, blamed the insolvency on the company's aggressive golf-course development and the bankruptcies of real-estate companies involved in various joint projects.

"In the process of expanding from public works projects to the private sector, construction related to golf courses ex-

panded sharply and contributed to increased profits. However, there were difficulties in buying land and delays in obtaining permits," Teikoku said in a statement.

Muramoto's liabilities are sizeable — representing 20 per cent of the liabilities of all 6,913 companies which went bankrupt in Japan in the six months to September. But analysts said the exposures to the company were fairly evenly spread among creditors and unlikely to trigger a major domino effect.

Muramoto was incorporated in its current structure in 1956, although it traces its beginnings back to 1908.

Now ranked as Japan's 24th-largest construction company, its net profit fell from 2.5 billion yen a year earlier to 1.7 billion yen in the year to June

1992, while revenue grew from 279 billion to 302 billion yen.

Private-sector contracts accounted for about three-quarters of its revenue with public works absorbing the rest, while building activities accounted for about 70 per cent of all revenue, civil engineering in such areas as highway interchanges and golf-course development accounted for about 30 per cent.

Muramoto was capitalised at 2.4 billion yen and had total assets of 429 billion yen in June 1992, when bank borrowings exceeded 238 billion yen.

The company's biggest shareholder is its president, Toyotsugu Muramoto, who held almost 19 per cent of all shares. Other family members held most of the other shares.

Saudi crown prince urges prudent water, power use

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz launched an appeal Sunday for prudent use of water and electricity in the kingdom.

In a speech to university officials, he also denounced media reports of a cash crisis in the kingdom, the top world oil exporter.

"You know that water resources in our country are scarce. We don't have rivers," the prince said, adding that sparse rainfall in the kingdom was not enough to fill reservoirs for irrigation and general

consumption. "Also the increasing consumption of electricity in industry and in general use dictates on us to cooperate together to use it within the limits of our needs," he said.

The official Saudi Press Agency said the crown prince was addressing visiting officials of the King Saud University.

Saudi Arabia has awarded several contracts to build desalination and power plants to meet the increasing demand for water and electricity. Industry sources estimate the kingdom currently produces

around 70 per cent of its daily requirements of drinking water.

The crown prince attacked Western media reports that the kingdom had financial difficulties and was going bankrupt.

"They speak a lot about Saudi Arabia's wealth and income and then we hear the contrast about it almost losing its cash reserves and that it is going bankrupt... that only comes from sick hearts... that speak with no knowledge of the truth and are only motivated by their deep hatred of our country," he said.

IDA gives Vietnam \$225m credits

HANOI (R) — The World Bank Monday gave Vietnam two credits totalling \$225.5 million and the bank's vice-president said it planned to pump \$1 billion into the country in the next three years.

Signature of agreements for the credits — \$70 million for primary education and \$155.5 million to upgrade the main north-south highway — completed Vietnam's reintegration into the international financial community following Washington's decision to stop blocking such loans.

Over the past month, Vietnam has also signed agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for \$23 million in loans and with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for a loan of \$76.5

million. Bank Vice President Gautam Kaji said the World Bank credits, its first to Vietnam for 15 years, were from its International Development Association (IDA) soft loan affiliate and were repayable over 40 years with a 10-year grace period and a service charge of 0.75 per cent.

The bank planned to finance other projects in Vietnam, he told a news conference. "We are doing some tentative planning around the figure of \$1 billion over the next three years," he said.

"That's not a ceiling, nor a floor..." he added. "The spe-

cific amount will depend on a number of factors — most importantly, Vietnam's ability to absorb it. This would call for discipline on the part of Vietnam and of donors."

At a donor conference in Paris next week, Vietnam will seek commitments from governments and international agencies for \$7 billion to \$8 billion in aid by the year 2000.

Mr. Kaji said the World Bank was planning a loan to Vietnam for agriculture and was contemplating structural adjustment-type credits for the future. It hoped to start talks soon on a three-year "rolling programme" of credits.

Arabs invest \$56 outside the Arab World for every dollar they invest home

DUBAI (R) — Inter-Arab investment is increasing but Arabs still place more funds outside the Arab World, speakers at an investment conference in Dubai said Monday.

"Presently \$56 are invested by Arabs outside the Arab countries against each dollar invested in the Arab countries," said Masoum Ibrahim Hassan, director general of the Kuwait-based Inter-Arab In-

vestment Guarantee Corporation.

The three-day conference, organised by the corporation, is attended by Arab investment officials as well as officials from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.

The cooperation, owned by 21 Arab states, insures Arab investors against political risk,

promotes inter-Arab investment and researches investment flows.

"The majority of the Arab countries nowadays are witnessing structural economic reforms. These reforms include many sectors, production, trade, financial, monetary and capital markets," Mr. Hassan said.

"Great hopes are attached

to these reforms to create a better investment climate in the Arab region," he said.

The corporation said in July that private inter-Arab investment rose to \$483 million in 1992 from \$277 million in 1987.

It said total private Arab investment outside the Arab World between 1950 and 1992 stood at \$670 billion, compared with \$11.9 billion within the Arab World.

Algeria expects \$10.5b oil, gas earnings

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria expects to earn \$10.5 billion from oil and gas exports this year compared with \$12 billion forecast by the previous government.

The economy ministry in a statement said foreign income "was projected to reach a total of \$10.5 billion despite the fall in prices of hydrocarbons noted in the second quarter" this year.

The ministry issued its statement late Sunday in response to a report in a French financial newspaper suggesting Algeria would earn no more than \$8.6 billion.

Last month, Prime Minister Redha Malek warned that the country's debt-burdened economy could worsen in 1994.

He said the last government had based forecasts on oil fetching \$20 or \$21 a barrel while the price in October was

\$18. "The drop in the price of a barrel reduces these returns to \$10 billion from \$12 at the moment when (debt) repayments Algeria must make are around \$9 billion," Mr. Malek said.

The ministry rejected suggestions that Algeria was not taking up French credits worth six billion francs (just over \$1 billion).

In the first 10 months of 1993, Algeria had mobilised

"3.9 billion francs of French credits, which is 65 per cent of total credits while there are still two months to run this year," it said in a statement carried by the official news agency APS.

"Some of the credits making up this six billion franc package are subject to very difficult conditions and procedures which makes using them very slow," it added.

China vows war on recording piracy

BEIJING (R) — Beijing promised Monday to join the world war on the bootlegging of musical recordings, a practice recording industry officials say is exploding in China.

"China is supporting the fight against piracy of phonographic products," Liu Xiliang, vice minister of radio, film and television, was quoted by the official Xinhua News Agency as saying.

"China's record and video companies are paying great attention to the protection of phonographic copyrights in both domestic and international terms," he said at a meeting of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, an anti-piracy watchdog.

China Record Co., the country's largest, has joined the federation and others are expected to follow, Mr. Liu said.

Western and Japanese music firms have begun complaining about an alarming rise in the quantity and quality of bootleg recordings made in China. They say the problem has not been addressed adequately by Beijing.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY NOVEMBER 2, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Canoli Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You will be needing to decide many issues today other than election outcomes. Changes in group activities and personal relationships are also indicated so don't make any promises that you don't intend to keep.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now you find you are benefiting by extending your activities beyond their present scope and you could make some very interesting new associations.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Whatever your attachment desires today should be taken seriously and attempt to be made a reality by you and let that person know your wishes.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is a splendid day to contact personalities who attract you and to do something unusual that will make them appreciate your best qualities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) And some charm and beauty to your surroundings and you will find that whatever you wish to do there will be with more comfort and operative skill.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You now find you can have one of your happiness days by what you plan for a later time or put in effect now so go after pleasures that appeal to you.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your home needs a good shot of improvement in the arm and this is the day when your

taste and judgment or good for making conditions more harmonious there.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) Now you would be wise to get outside the family circle and to make some new contacts as well as show appreciation for those who have been loyal to you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can do those things now which improve the appearance and value of your property as well as go after a raise in pay for any work performed.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You have it in your power now to go after your personal goals with vim, vigor and vitality and then they are almost certain to be yours soon.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have some private ambitions which require you pursue in a most cheerful and optimistic manner if they are to be a part of your daily existence.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A great day for you to express that gregariousness which is so a part of your nature and character so get in the touch with friends, arrange to see them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) The outside world is your oyster now so do whatever civic, credit or career interest affect you there and get them quietly arranged as you wish.

Peanuts



Andy Capp

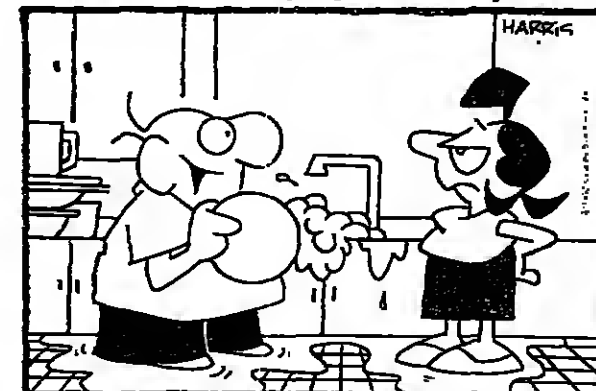


Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF.

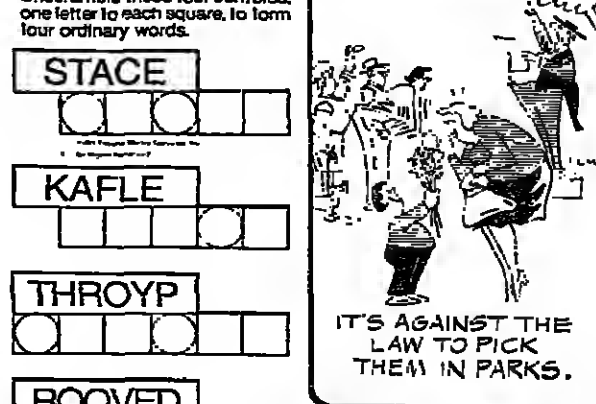
By Harris



"Washing dishes is fun if you pretend you're Godzilla and the forks are submarines..."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

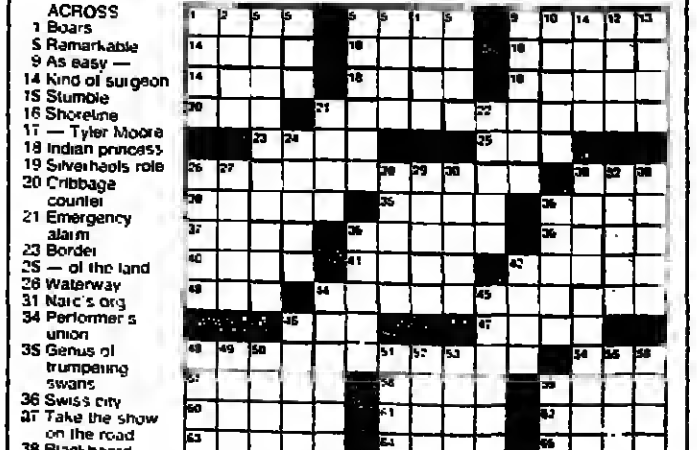
Yesterday's Jumbles: 1010M SPURN FIERCE AUTHOR

Answer: The back part of these weapons is in the center — FIREARMS

BIRTHSTONES FOR NOVEMBER
TOPAZ - TIGER EYE
Available loose or in gold at:
DAJANI
Amira Hotel, 6th Circle

THE Daily Crossword

by Raymond Hamel



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1. Bored	3. Like Godzilla	31. Theorist
2. Remarkable	4. Like Raymond	32. Wood's partner
3. Easy	5. Lovers	33. Price bonus
4. Kind of surgeon	6. Arab land	34. Egyptian deity
5. Slumlord	7. Part type	35. A star
6. Shoreline	8. "Oldies" song	36. Dumpster
7. Tyler Moore	9. Tangible	
8. Indian process	10. Late chimneys	
9. Silverheels role	11. Became hard	
10. Critbage	12. Rival words	
11. Emergency	13. Wavelength	
12. alarm	14. Matter	
13. Border	15. Big cat	
14. — of the land	16. Loud sound	
15. Waterway	17. Mellow	
16. Natic's song	18. Oreo	
17. The Good	19. Ahead of	
18. Earn	20. Punctuation	
19. character	21. Stand	
20. Salver	22. Untrue	
21. Lay of opera	23. Measured	
22. Ralph of "The	24. Unhappy	
23. Waitress	25. Expropriate	
24. Craving	26. Crow	
25. Source of	27. Break point	
26. Hebrides	28. Enraged	
27. Hebrides	29. Metal tag on a	
28. Hebrides	30. shoe	
29. Hebrides	31. Neiman Marcus	
30. Hebrides	32. Brain passage	
31. Hebrides	33. Hunting call	
32. Hebrides	34. Zest	
33. Hebrides	35. Barber's call	

Haiti right-wing parties fail to form government

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — Haiti's small right-wing parties called Sunday for new elections, but their bid for power fizzled amid disagreement over who should replace ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Boosted by the failure of the U.N. plan to return Mr. Aristide to power, a dozen right-wing parties held a round of talks in a bid to seize power and form a new government. The talks ended with no consensus on who should rule or how that rule should be implemented, party leaders backed off of their earlier bravado and issued a declaration made up only of vague demands.

The groups, many of which revere the memory of the late dictator Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier, demanded parliament invoke Article 149 of the constitution which calls for new elections and for the head of the Supreme Court on another leading jurist to take over as interim president.

"We demand the immediate application of Article 149 for the formation of a government of national unity," said Emmanuel Constant, head of the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti (FRAPH), widely accused of organising the feared militia known as "attachés."

U.S. and U.N. diplomats have warned any constitutional coup d'état would be met by sterner sanctions than the oil and arms embargo imposed two weeks ago.

Parliament was not scheduled to meet Monday, a holiday in Haiti.

The rightists justify their bid for power by saying Mr. Aristide lost all credibility from midnight Saturday, the dead-

line for his homecoming under the terms of a U.N.-brokered agreement signed on July 3 on New York's Governor's Island by the exiled leader and Haiti's army chief, Lieutenant-General Raoul Cedras.

"Governor's Island is absolutely dead," Mr. Constant said.

A declaration issued by the parties after the meetings, called for new elections within 90 days and urged all political parties — including Mr. Aristide's — to join in a consensus government.

The parties called for the resignation of Mr. Aristide and Prime Minister Robert Malval. It said Mr. Cedras had served "with dignity and honour," but also called for his resignation. Gen. Cedras so far has refused to carry through his promise to resign under the terms of the U.N. accord, saying he will not quit until the parliament approves an amnesty for those involved in the bloody September 1991 coup that toppled Mr. Aristide, and acts of political repression since.

Eric Falt, a U.N. spokesman, dismissed the rightists' proposals as unimportant. "The only importance they have is given to them by the media," he said.

Mr. Constant has proposed inviting General Colin Powell, the recently retired chairman of the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs of Staff, to mediate.

"Powell is an honest guy, a well-known person and very experienced. He has credibility," Mr. Constant told Reuters. "We would obviously be dealing with military matters so he would be very useful."

Vladimir Jeanty, a priest and Aristide critic who leads the Haitian Party of God, predicted new sanctions would

have little effect.

"We are going to let the U.N. do what it has the power to do. We are going to say, 'if you want to kill us, kill us. If you want to invade, invade.' We want everybody to know... that Aristide is a crazy man. We will just ask parliament to go ahead and establish who should be president," Fr. Jeanty said.

Other plotters were more radical. Reynold Georges, leader of the Alliance for the Liberation and Advancement of Haiti, warned that Mr. Malval, and U.N. special envoy Dante Caputo were hest advised not to resist the right-wingers' power grab.

Meanwhile the New York Times reported Monday that key members of the military regime controlling Haiti and blocking the return of Mr. Aristide were paid informants working for the CIA.

The newspaper, quoting American officials, said the CIA, as part of its intelligence-gathering operations in Haiti, cultivated, recruited and paid generals and politicians.

This practice occurred from the mid-1980s at least until the 1991 coup that forced Mr. Aristide from power, the paper said, with the intelligence agency paying for information about everything from cocaine smuggling to political ferment.

It said that a government official familiar with the practice did not name names, but said that "several of the principal players in the present situation were compensated by the U.S. government."

The paper said it was not clear how much money was involved, or when the payments ended, but they were described as being of a modest amount.



A demonstrator points to the photograph of Haiti's former dictator Francois Duvalier during an anti-Aristide rally held outside the government palace in Port Au Prince, Haiti (AFP photo)

Maastricht Treaty quietly implemented

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community's (EC) treaty to create a single currency came quietly into effect Monday, without any of the fireworks that marked its rocky passage.

The Maastricht Treaty on closer European union was implemented after nearly two years of bitter squabbling which deeply divided the 12-member bloc. However, there was no fanfare at the EC's sprawling headquarters in Brussels where employees were given the day off to mark All Saints Day.

Despite its low-key entry, the treaty marks a new era for the EC, effectively establishing a new "European citizenship" for the region's inhabitants.

It also provides the EC with the ambitious new goals of creating a single currency by the end of the century and forcing common foreign and security policies.

Belgium, current holder of the EC's six-month rotating presidency, hailed the implementation of the treaty. Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene told Bel-

gian radio the treaty would enable EC nations to act more effectively on issues such as security and drugs trafficking. "The treaty provides Europe with supplementary measures... This should allow us to attack problems on an international level together," Mr. Dehaene said.

A string of new EC institutions will be created under the new plan, including a future EC central bank, the European Monetary Institute, which will be based in Frankfurt.

Burundi army rejects foreign troops

BUJUMBURA (R) — Burundi's army Monday rejected plans to deploy foreign troops in the Central African state, 11 days after toppling the elected government and killing President Melchior Ndayaye and six ministers.

"The Burundi army totally rejects any attempts to deploy foreign troops anywhere in the country. This is against our laws, against Burundi's common good," army spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Bosco Daradanga told Reuters in an interview.

Remnants of Mr. Ndayaye's government, led by Prime

Minister Sylvie Kinigi, have been holed up at the French embassy in the capital since the Oct. 21 coup. They say they will only come out of hiding if an estimated 1,000 foreign troops are deployed in the country to give them security.

"We (the military) cannot understand what the government means by calling for foreign protection. The Burundi army is capable of securing the lives of its leaders," Col. Daradanga said.

Planes carrying foreign troops or military cargo would not be allowed to land in the capital Bujumbura, he added. He said the date for the prop-

osed deployment of foreign forces was still unknown but "if they come here, against our wishes, there will be many problems, chaos."

Col. Daradanga said the army was angry that some of 20 French military advisers had moved to the French embassy as an initial protection force for Ms. Kinigi and her government.

Tribal violence, triggered by the coup and in which witnesses say several thousand people have died, has swept Burundi, although Ms. Kinigi's government says it has taken charge.

Indian opposition steps up pressure on government over Kashmir siege

SRINAGAR, India (Agencies) — A leader of India's main opposition party urged the government Monday to quickly resolve the 17-day-old army siege of the Hazratbal Mosque, but no settlement to the standoff appeared in sight.

The Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley remained paralysed by a general strike called by Muslim separatist groups to protest the Indian army siege of the holiest Islamic shrine in the strife-torn northern state.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, parliamentary leader of the Hindu revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party), demanded that the government take "strong action" against the 50 armed Muslim militants holed up in the mosque.

Mr. Vajpayee, speaking to reporters in the northern resort town of Shimla, accused the government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao of being "directionless."

Shops and businesses, government offices, educational

institutions, banks and post offices were shut throughout the Kashmir Valley Monday in response to the call for a protest strike. Private vehicles were off the roads.

There have been intermittent strike calls since thousands of Indian army troops laid siege to the picturesque Hazratbal Mosque on the night of Oct. 15, trapping the Muslim guerrillas and an estimated 70 civilians inside.

The authorities Monday lifted a curfew imposed in Srinagar the summer capital of Kashmir, but maintained the restrictions on movement in areas around the mosque.

Negotiations aimed at ending the crisis collapsed over the weekend after Kashmiri Muslim leaders serving as mediators between the Kashmir government and the rebels pulled out.

The Indian army wants the militants to give themselves up. The gunmen have refused to surrender and insist on safe passage to end the stalemate

which has triggered bloody street protests in Kashmir.

Meanwhile, the son of the maharaja who merged his kingdom of Kashmir with India 46 years ago urged India and Pakistan Monday to negotiate a settlement over the still-disputed territory.

There is a dangerous situation in the valley and it needs urgent attention. There could be another India-Pakistan war in Jammu-Kashmir state if the problem isn't solved immediately," said Karan Singh.

Departing from Indian policy, Mr. Singh called for multi-lateral talks among India, Pakistan and Kashmiris from both sides of the ceasefire line dividing the Himalayan land.

He also urged India to show "utmost patience and restraint" in dealing with separatist militants holding Kashmir's holiest shrine, the Hazratbal Mosque. The militants and scores of civilians have been under siege by the Indian army since Oct. 15.

U.K., Ireland vow to pursue Ulster peace process

LONDON (AFP) — Britain and Ireland appeared intent Monday on pursuing new peace initiatives in Northern Ireland, despite a weekend massacre that capped the bloodiest week in decades in the violence-torn province.

Prime Ministers John Major of Ireland vowed late Sunday not to be deflected from the incipient peace process by the machinegun attack on a Catholic pub Saturday night that left seven dead and 11 wounded.

The Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) claimed the attack to continuing reprisal for an Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomb that killed 10 in Belfast a week earlier. In all, 23 were killed in eight days.

Mr. Major condemned the pub attack, in the community of Greysteel northwest of Londonderry, as "yet another act of evil hushery."

Mr. Reynolds said that as far as the peace process was concerned, "nothing has changed."

Mr. Major's office also indicated the premier's door was open to John Hume, leader of Ulster's moderate, mainly Catholic Social Democratic

and Labour Party (SDLP), who need only request a meeting.

Mr. Hume had held months of secret talks with Gerry Adams, leader of the Irish Republican Army's political wing, Sinn Fein, and the two devised a peace proposal, not yet made public, which is said to be under considerations in London and Dublin.

Until now, Mr. Major had given the strong impression he wanted nothing to do with any peace formula involving Mr. Adams, whose IRA links were underlined when he acted as a pall-bearer at the mid-week funeral of the IRA bomber killed by his own device in Belfast Oct. 23.

"Although we have not received any formal request, the prime minister has made it repeatedly clear that his door is always open to leaders of all the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland," said Mr. Major's office.

Mr. Major and Mr. Reynolds met in Brussels last Friday on the sidelines of the European Council summit to discuss a six-point Irish peace plan announced by Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring.

That plan reportedly included the essential components of the Hume-Adams proposal.

Mr. Major was due to brief the House of Commons on the Brussels summit, as well as the situation in Northern Ireland and his talks with Mr. Reynolds.

Unionist MPs were meanwhile under heavy pressure to confront loyalist paramilitary brigades such as the UFF in a bid to end the slaughter.

Politicians and churchmen in Britain and Ireland appealed for calm, but some said the only way to stop the bloodshed was for the unionist MPs to meet the paramilitaries face-to-face.

"Unionist politicians should do it as a matter of urgency," said Seamus Mallon, deputy SDLP leader. "If they haven't the courage to do that, then I and my party are prepared to do it."

Nationalist leaders believe unionists could also stop the killings if they opened talks with the UFF and the Ulster Volunteer Force.

ICRC appeals to Bosnian fighters

SARAJEVO (R) — The International Red Cross (ICRC) Monday appealed to Croats and Muslim forces to honour the rules of war and spare civilians caught up in fierce fighting in central Bosnia.

It reported devastation and chaos in the mainly-Croat Vares area where thousands of refugees, most of them Muslims, were fleeing for their lives.

The Muslim-led Bosnian government army told U.N. peacekeepers its units shot dead 19 Croat soldiers who tried to escape after being captured in fighting around Bugojno 60 kilometres west of Vares.

The Red Cross statement in Sarajevo said: "The situation in Vares appears chaotic. Thousands of civilians have been forced to flee from their homes... they are fleeing looting, death threats, mistreatment and are desperately searching for protection."

ICRC officials on the spot "noted repeated allegations of civilians and prisoners being summarily executed during and after the fighting."

They urged the Bosnian army and forces of the Croat Defence Council (HVO) to end blatant violations of humanitarian law and "respect the civilian population, the wounded and the detainees."

Bill Aikman, a spokesman for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia, said attacking government troops advanced 1,000 metres into the Vares pocket at the weekend and captured the village of Dubostica.

Some 200 Croat villagers took refuge in Vares town nine kilometres to the south. Vares straddles a main supply route linking the Muslim strongholds of Tuzla in east Bosnia and Zenica to the west.

The killing of the Croat prisoners of war near Bugojno was investigated by British U.N. units Sunday after reports that 22 Croat soldiers had been captured.

Col. Aikman said the British were not allowed to enter Bugojno but were told by the Muslims that 19 had been shot in a mass escape attempt.

"The patrol then demanded to see the other three and were told this was not possible," he added. "We have no information beyond that other than the fact that something serious has happened."

UNPROFOR reopened Sarajevo Airport to relief flights after halting the air bridge Sunday because of an attack in which a French officer was wounded by gunfire.

Col. Aikman told reporters that peacekeepers thought it was safe to resume operations which are a vital lifeline for the 380,000 population of the city under Serb siege for 19 months.

The U.N. has been alarmed by a resurgence in fighting on Sunday around the Muslim settlement of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia.

Col. Aikman said Serbs hit the enclave, designated a U.N. safe area, with artillery fire and that the Muslim launched mortars.

"This means that someone has mortars inside the pocket, not very many, but someone from the Bosnian (army) side has them," he added.

Laureates lose phones, cards, cash at Thal talks

BANGKOK (R) — Winners of Asia's leading public-service award got a lesson in delinquency at a weekend seminar when thieves made off with their mobile telephones, cash cards and money. Police said the victims were four Thai winners of the Philippines-based Ramon Magsaysay Foundation Awards. They included politician Chamlong Srimuang and Pratheep Ungsomthan Hata, a social activist who runs slum projects. The stolen items included four portable phones, cash cards and more than 200 in cash which the laureates had left in a meeting room, the police said. Newspapers Monday quoted police as saying waiters, waitresses or sound technicians at Saturday's seminar on "Education in a changing world" could have been responsible.

Japan oldsters make Dewi's nude book a smash hit

TOKYO (R) — Elderly Japanese have turned a book of nude photographs of 33-year-old former Indonesian first lady Dewi Sukarno into a roaring bestseller, its publishers said Monday. The book went on sale at the weekend and by Monday it appeared that all 100,000 copies from the initial print run had been sold, a spokesman for scholar publishing said. "The exact numbers aren't in yet but it looks like all copies have gone," he said. "This is a great hit."

Entitled Shuga ("superior in elegance") and priced at 4,800 yen (\$44), the book seems to have wowed Japan's senior citizens. "Most buyers are older than 55," the spokesman said. Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, married Japanese-born Geisha Naoko Nemoto in 1962. At his bidding, she changed her name to Ratna Sari Dewi. Sukarno handed over power to the military in 1967. After his death in 1970, Dewi, the youngest of his six wives, became an international jet-setter. The nude pictures in the new book were shot in Paris, Tokyo, Kyoto and Indonesia. Jakarta authorities have reacted coolly to its publication. "It is a personal matter of the person concerned and there is no need to link it to her position as a former wife of the first Indonesian president," Antara News Agency quoted State Secretary Mardiono as saying Saturday.

Australia to sell crocodile meat to Hong Kong

DARWIN, Australia (AFP) — Australian crocodile meat may soon be gracing the tables of Hong Kong if negotiations on health standards go as planned, quarantine authorities said here Monday. Peter Niall, a food scientist with the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS), said AQIS had set aside the fears of the Hong Kong authorities that the crocodiles may have been killed in the wild. "We've been able to assure them these animals are farmed in controlled conditions and meet with CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) approval," Mr. Niall said. "We are hopeful of settling on standards within weeks," he added.

Fungus may help end ancient plague

WASHINGTON (AP) — The locusts that Moses called down to plague Egypt still infest that part of the world, but a Swiss scientist says spraying them with a deadly fungus could end the swarms that sometimes darken the African sun. Unlike chemical pesticides, the fungus does not harm animals or even other insects, said Hans R. Herren. He has been reporting to the consultative group on International Agricultural Research. "One thing we have to be careful about is that the fungus can breed toxins — the way mold does on spoiled food," he said in an interview. "Many Africans like to eat locusts. You can even buy them canned." The locust is a short-bodied grasshopper about two inches (five cm) long. A swarm near the Red Sea once covered 2,000 square miles (5,200 sq. km), an area twice as big as Luxembourg. Locusts and grasshoppers are a bane of farmers in many countries, especially a great swathe of land from the Sahel of Central Africa to China. Migrating grasshoppers did serious damage to crops in the western United States in the 1930s.

Shevardnadze rules out compromise with rebels

TBILISI (Agencies) — Georgia said Monday its forces had driven rebels out of the western town of Senaki and head of state Eduard Shevardnadze ruled out compromise with his enemies to end the "black plague" of civil war.

Mr. Shevardnadze's spokesman Zaza Kandelaki told national television that government troops had regained full control of Senaki, a major road and rail junction, and forced the rebels to abandon the town late Sunday.

There was no immediate confirmation of the report which, if true, would mean that Senaki had changed hands for the third time in less than a week in Georgia's see-saw civil war.

"Today, to all intents and purposes, Georgia is in a state of civil war," Mr. Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister, said in a television interview.

"In spite of the fact that everything was done on our side to avoid this scourge and unite Georgia, the black plague afflicting us must pass as soon as possible."

"I always strove to make compromises. But today, this will only lead to more victims. The grave conflicts taking place today must bring one result: 'A guarantee of the unity of Georgia'."

Government spokesmen said communications with Senaki had been cut and could only say that there was major damage to the town.

Mr. Kandelaki said the government had moved extra manpower and weaponry to fortify Senaki and prevent it falling back into rebel hands.

The mountainous Transcaucasian republic has been racked by war for much of the two years since it won independence from the Soviet Union.

Fujimori: Everyone won in constitutional vote

LIMA (R) — President Alberto Fujimori said Sunday all Peruvians had won a victory by narrowly approving a new constitution that opens the way for his reelection bid in 1995.

"We can all be satisfied. Those who voted for 'yes' and those who voted for 'no,'" Mr. Fujimori said in a television interview Sunday night.

Despite his remarks some analysts differed with Fujimori on the outcome of the results. The Apoyo polling firm said early results showed nearly 53 per cent of the voters had supported the charter drafted by an 80-member Congress that replaced the legislature Mr. Fujimori dissolved in April 1992.

Mr. Fujimori, who had portrayed the vote as a plebiscite on his three-year-old government, said the results were closer than he had expected.

He accused the opposition of having carried out a campaign of disinformation around issues such as the elimination of universal free education, lifetime job stability and establishment of the death penalty for guerrilla leaders.

Mr. Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants who swept to power in 1990 with votes of Peruvians fed up with traditional politics, said his 65-per cent popularity rating was not easily transferable to a vote on a constitution.

But Roberto Mendez, head of a Chilean polling firm who was here to watch the referendum, said: "We saw the best result possible. This will oblige the government to listen to minority opinions it might have

ignored had it won by a big margin."

Other analysts said the result showed that Mr. Fujimori had made mistakes by trying to use letters by jailed Shining Path guerrilla chief Abimael Guzman seeking peace talks for his political gain during the campaign.

"With the second letter and Guzman's endorsement of the suspension of constitutional rule, voters realised there was political manipulation for electoral ends and this took away credibility," said Jaime De Althaus of Expresso newspaper.

Mr. Fujimori used the successes against Peru's two guerrilla groups, including detention of their leaders, as his main platform in the referendum campaign.

Meanwhile Mr. Garcia has applied for Colombian citizenship a little more than a year after he was granted political asylum in the country, the national radio network RCN reported Sunday.

But his application for citizenship did not mean he was revoking his Peruvian one, RCN quoted Mr. Garcia's lawyer as saying. Under Colombia's new constitution, double citizenship is allowed.

Mr. Garcia sought political asylum in Colombia in May 1992 after Mr. Fujimori succeeded him as president of Peru. He said he did so because he was being persecuted by Mr. Fujimori's government, which had accused him, among other things, of embezzling funds from his political party.

Freedom Alliance to pursue talks with Pretoria

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The South African government and the conservative Freedom Alliance will hold intensive three-day talks from Tuesday, in a last-ditch bid to avert a crisis, an alliance spokesman said Monday.

The talks, to be held at a secret venue, will begin Tuesday night and continue through Thursday, spokesman Rowan Cronje told the South African Press Association.

A meeting Friday between alliance leaders and President F.W. de Klerk ended in deadlock when Mr. De Klerk gave only limited support to the conservative group's proposal for a summit of all political leaders.

The umbrella grouping was formed on Oct. 7 to give a united negotiating voice to the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, the Ciskei and Bophuthatwana black tribal homelands and the white right-wing Conservative Party and Afrikaner Volkfront (AVF).

Alliance members have all withdrawn from the multi-party talks, demanding that strong regionalism and a separate white homeland be entrenched in the constitution currently being hammered out by democracy negotiators.

Press reports over the weekend said the government and the African National Congress (ANC), the two main players at the negotiating table, had agreed to increased powers for the regions — a major policy shift for the ANC.

These included exclusive powers in the fields of agriculture, cultural affairs, education, health, housing, language policy, local government, police, public transport, roads, tourism, trade and welfare services.

But Mr. Cronje said Monday that the alliance wanted greater powers than proposed by the government and the ANC to raise taxes.

The spokesman said the alliance had considered the latest submissions Monday, "and we totally disagree that it provides for a federal-type constitution."

Taxation remained essentially in the hands of central government and all other powers were concurrent rather than exclusive, he said.

But Mr. Cronje said, the government had assured the alliance that its views could be accommodated, which explained why it had agreed to further talks.

Referee says fatter Maradona was better

SYDNEY (Agencies) — Argentine superstar Diego Maradona must have dieted away all his strength when he shed 12 kg to return to World Cup soccer against Australia, match referee Sándor Puhl said Monday.

"He looked completely unfit for a match of this calibre," said Puhl, who refereed the 1-1 draw between Australia and Argentina at the Sydney Football Stadium.

"I think he was fatter when he was fatter," Puhl said. "He never broke out of a mere jog, and when he did, he took a long time to recover," the Hungarian referee said.

Maradona, making his international comeback as captain after an eight-month layoff, had a relatively quiet game except for a moment of magic which produced Argentina's goal.

The former Napoli and Sevilla star, who now plays for Newell's Old Boys in Argentina, produced a left-footed cross for Abel Balbo to head home for the, twice world champions.

Maradona, who celebrated his 33rd birthday Saturday, was largely kept in check by Australian marker Paul Wade.

The star, on a visit to Sydney's Taronga Zoo Monday with his wife Claudia, declined to comment on the game as he happily fondled a baby koala and played with a young kangaroo.

The visibly delighted Maradona asked Gary Punch, the parliamentary secretary for defence who accompanied him on the visit, if the zoo in Buenos Aires could acquire koalas.

Mr. Punch said Canberra, which must authorise exports of the fragile national symbol, would react favourably to a request.

Argentine coach Alfio Basile said he expects Maradona and the rest of the team to play better in Argentina in the second leg on Nov. 17, to earn a spot at the World Cup finals in the United States next year.



Argentine captain Diego Maradona (right) man-oeuvres past Australian captain Paul Wade during the first leg of the World Cup qualifying match in Sydney Sunday (AFP photo)

Maradona also picked up a yellow card for dissent in the dying minutes of the match.

Puhl said he booked Maradona after he queried whether Australia should have been awarded a corner.

"He (Maradona) kept on, and when I waved him away, he just kept gesticulating and arguing in a pleading tone, so I had no choice," Puhl said, speaking through an interpreter.

Puhl said he had been surprised by Australia's confident performance.

"I was truly impressed," he said. "Technically they are as good as many European national teams, and certainly when it comes to fitness and commitment they leave a good many behind."

"It pains me to say it, but Australia would easily beat Hungary at the moment. They are much more competitive than our players."

Maradona and Argentina moved a step closer to a spot in the World Cup soccer finals, but Australia has vowed the

fight is not yet over.

Although Argentina will have the home advantage for the second leg in Buenos Aires, the Australian players said they still believe their chances are good.

"We scared the living day-lights out of Argentina," said the Australian captain, Wade. "We have every reason to hold our heads high. We may not do what Colombia did, but Argentina will still have to look out."

Colombia beat Argentina 5-0 in Buenos Aires last month, forcing the two-time champions into a playoff with the lightly regarded Australians and coach Alfio Basile to completely revamp his team.

The new-look Argentine team was only a partial success. The midfield did not play well despite the presence of Maradona. Forward Balbo and Gabriel Batistuta often lacked support.

Australian coach Eddie Thomson predicted his underdogs could thrive on the extra

space they will have in the second leg match, expecting the Argentine players will be more attack-minded playing at home.

"We played some super stuff in the first half and showed that it will not be an impossible task in Buenos Aires," Thomson said. "In a way, I think we'll be happier away from home. We will be a better team when Argentina have to attack us."

Thomson will have striker Frank Farina, who was suspended for the first match, to use alongside Graham Arnold, who was closely shadowed throughout the game by stopper Sergio Vazquez.

The Argentine players were delighted and relieved with the 1-1 result, embracing each other at the final whistle.

Basile said he was satisfied with Maradona's limited contribution.

"I thought he played well after such a long break," Basile said. "He was clever to create the goal."

Milan coach blames referee for loss to Sampdoria

ROME (R) — AC Milan coach Fabio Capello pointed an angry finger at match referee Marcello Nicchi following Sunday's 3-2 away loss to Sampdoria.

Speaking minutes after a defeat which saw Milan knocked off the top of the table for the first time since Oct. 20, 1991, Capello bitterly claimed that all three Sampdoria goals were irregular, saying:

"I have to say that I thought long and hard before coming here to this news conference... because in the dressing room I found a side completely destroyed by what they have suffered."

"Firstly, with regard to the first goal, the header from Srecko Katanec, I cannot really say much but the lads tell me there were a number of Sampdoria players offside."

"Secondly, Sampdoria won a penalty (subsequently converted by Roberto Mancini) after a penalty area mix up in which it was difficult to see anything..."

"Thirdly, for the third goal it was just scandalous. Our de-

fence makes a clearance. Roberto Mancini stops it with his hand and then launches Rudi Gullit for the winning goal."

Capello's complaints inevitably contrasted with the euphoric mood of Dutchman Rudi Gullit, a former AC Milan idol who was sold by the club this summer because it considered his top class career as good as over.

"Yeah, I'm very pleased and

European Soccer

for lots of reasons. Above all because Sampdoria have managed to do what all Italy have been wanting — compete with and defeat Milan," said Gullit afterwards.

Milan may have bitter recriminations about the circumstances in which their 72-match reign at the top ended, but their defeat has dramatically opened up a championship contest rendered almost boring by their imposing dominance of the last two seasons.

Gullit proved his point to former club AC Milan by scor-

ing Sampdoria's winning goal in the eagerly-awaited top-of-the-table clash against the champions Sunday.

The Dutch international, who was written-off and transferred by AC Milan at the end of last season, ended the deadlock with a goal twelve minutes before the final whistle. It was his seventh league goal of the year.

Juventus joined Sampdoria on 15 points from ten matches after Roberto Baggio scored a hat-trick in their 4-0 demolition of Genoa. Juventus scored three goals in eight minutes in the second-half with Andy Moeller joining Baggio on the scoresheet in the 51st minute.

Ruben Sosa prevented Parma from overtaking both clubs and claiming sole leadership of the division.

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"Man of

Jihad threatens to kill Egyptian military judges

CAIRO (Agencies) — A Muslim extremist group on Monday threatened to kill eight military judges to avenge death sentences against fellow radicals. The threat came two days after the latest bangings were ordered by military courts.

It was made in a statement sent to an international news agency in Cairo and signed by the Jihad (Holy War), the group that assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

The statement listed by name the eight judges it was threatening. All have handed down death sentences against the Vanguard of Conquest, an offshoot of Jihad or the Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah.

Both groups say their spiritual leader is Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, who is on trial in the United States for allegedly plotting the bombing of the World Trade Centre and attacks on other New York landmarks.

The Jihad statement said the judges are "sinners who should be killed." It said the group was sending a religious edict telling its followers to "spill the blood of all the criminal officers whose names were mentioned."

Meanwhile, suspected Muslim extremists shot and killed a police agent Monday near Assiut, a militant stronghold 320 kilometres south of Cairo. The victim, Mohammad Kathout, was gunned down as he headed for the police station in the town of Al Badari.

It was the second slaying since death sentences were issued Saturday against eight Vanguard members on charges of killing two men and stealing their weapons to carry out the extremist campaign to topple Egypt's sectarian government.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility in Monday's slaying. But witnesses said that the assailants who killed a policeman on Saturday shouted slogans about aveng-

ing the death sentences.

Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi, meanwhile, raised the number of top-level security officials in southern Egypt in an attempt to head off further attacks.

"The police force is strong and able," General Alfi said in a meeting with ministry officials, adding that the "battle against terrorists may continue for a long time."

Military courts sentenced eight Muslim militants to death and another 92 to jail terms over the weekend in the latest in a year-long series of trials. The courts have sentenced a total of 38 militants to death for attacking security officers and tourists.

The most recent trials were of 248 suspects accused of trying to restart the Jihad group under the name of Vanguard of Conquest.

"The Islamic Jihad offers its condolences to the Egyptian people and Islamic Nation on the death sentences and prison terms of the cases of the Vanguard, asserting that these young men were sentenced for carrying out their holy struggle in the path of God and to establish an Islamic state in Egypt and free it from American and Jewish imperialism," Monday's statement said.

"Islamic scholars are agreed that whoever abandons the rule of God... is an infidel that should be killed. The culprits have shed the blood of our Muslim strugglers by convicting them to death."

The statement was the latest sign Egypt's armed forces are slowly being drawn into the government's 18-month struggle with the militants.

It named five generals, a brigadier, a colonel and a lieutenant-colonel who served on the three-man panels that judged the militants in trials. Fundamentalist lawyers and human rights activists have criticised for lack of proper procedure.

Fifteen militants have already been hanged following the sentences. Another nine are on death row and 14 are on the run.

Security operation against the militants have been solely carried out by Egypt's 300,000-strong conscript police force.

But militants tried to assassinate an army general in July in an operation political analysts think was aimed at one of the judges in the military courts.

Defence Minister Field Marshal Mobammad Hussein Tantawi this month issued the army's strongest statement yet on militant violence, saying he was prepared to involve the armed forces as a last resort.

A senior Egyptian official said in comments published Sunday that a large number of Egyptian Islamic militants have recently moved to Europe where they are organising "terrorist" strikes against the government here.

General Abdul Rahim Al Nahas, an advisor to Interior Minister Alfi, said the fundamentalists were living "mainly in Bulgaria and Denmark," in an interview with Al Ahram newspaper.

The militants, most of them veterans of the 1979-1988 struggle against invading Soviet forces in Afghanistan, had moved there from Pakistan after Islamabad cut short their residence permits, he said.

"Exiled fundamentalist leaders have planned terrorist operations from those countries, and contacted their colleagues in Egypt," Gen. Nahas said.

The Egyptian authorities had contacted officials in countries where fundamentalists were living.

Gen. Nahas said several fundamentalist leaders were forced to leave Pakistan and Afghan territory following "coordination" between the Egyptian and Pakistani authorities.



SETTLER RAMPAGE: A Jewish settler fires at Palestinians while his comrade changes his magazine and others take cover in Jena, near the West Bank refugee camp of Jalazma early

Monday. Trouble erupted after settlers put up road blocks and damaged Arab homes. Palestinians responded with stone-throwing (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arafat wants Arabs to free frozen assets

RABAT (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has asked King Hassan of Morocco to urge Arab states to release the organisation's assets frozen during the Gulf crisis. In a message to the Moroccan monarch with whom he is due to confer in Rabat Monday, Mr. Arafat said the peace accord with Israel would require "enormous" financial resources. "You are aware of the financial blockade imposed on our people and the Palestine Liberation Organisation particularly by those close to us, which affects us painfully, all the more so because they are holding important PLO assets," he wrote. PLO assets were frozen by certain Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia when the PLO backed Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1991.

Moroccans to develop tourism in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A group of Moroccan businessmen will set up a company to promote tourism in Israel and the occupied lands, Israeli legislators said Sunday. The venture, unthinkable prior to the Sept. 13, Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement, will include Israeli and Palestinian businessmen, legislator Eli Dayan told the Associated Press. "Its first goal is to promote tourism," said Mr. Dayan, a Moroccan-born lawmaker who belongs to the ruling Labour Party. Economics Minister Shimon Shetrit confirmed the venture. The announcement came with a first of its kind visit to Israel by 14 Moroccan banking, construction and industrial leaders.

Will Israeli shampoo make Egyptians go bald?

CAIRO (R) — Shampoo smuggled from Israel is turning up in Egyptian markets and a leading economist is worried that it could wipe users' pates bare. "It is a very dangerous matter," Essam Rifaa, editor of Al Ahram Al Iqtisadi, wrote in Monday's edition. "We don't know what is inside the shampoo bottle and whether its contents are healthy or not... or if it will make Egyptians' hair fall out." Mr. Rifaa said he had seen shampoo and other Israeli goods brought into Egypt by merchant seamen in the free port zone of Port Said when he attended a conference there. Egypt broke the Arab boycott of Israel when it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979.

Curfew ends in Sudan capital

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's military government ended a four-year-old curfew in the capital but most of Khartoum's 3.5 million residents stayed home on the first night. Sunday night was the first night since Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir seized power four years ago that residents were free to roam the city between midnight and 4 a.m. But most people stayed at home after midnight, partly out of habit and partly because few people had heard that the curfew had been lifted.

Iraq warns Kuwait over Bush plot trial

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's ruling Baath Party newspaper warned Kuwait's leaders Monday they would face a day of reckoning for detaining 11 Iraqis accused of trying to kill former U.S. President George Bush. "The day will come when the rulers of Kuwait shall pay the price of their crimes against Iraq and its people," the newspaper Al Thawra said. "In the forefront of judgment list will be the drama of the alleged attempt to kill the cursed criminal (U.S. President George) Bush and the detention of... Iraqis for this empty offence," it said.

Qadhafi, Mubarak to discuss easing sanctions

DOHA (AP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi are to meet in a week to discuss U.N. sanctions against Libya, a newspaper reported Monday. Qatar's Arabic-language daily, Al Sharq, said the two leaders will meet in Libya to discuss the outcome of Egyptian contacts in connection with Libyan-West crisis. Mr. Mubarak recently had talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton in the United States and with French President Francois Mitterrand in France. The pro-government paper quoted unidentified diplomatic sources in Cairo as saying that Mr. Mubarak and Colonel Qadhafi were expected to meet either in Tripoli or Tohuk.

Former Filipino prisoner arrives en route home

AMMAN (AP) — A Filipino freed by Iraq after 14 months in detention arrived here Monday en route to Manila and said he never doubted his country would secure his release. Nicanor Factoran, 48, of Manila, appeared healthy but tired after his ordeal. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein ordered his release after receiving an appeal from Philippines President Fidel Ramos. "I am very happy that I'm finally going home," he told the Associated Press after meeting with officials at the Philippines embassy in Amman.

Reward doubled in Satanic Verses shooting

OSLO (AP) — The reward for information about the shooting of the Norwegian publisher of "The Satanic Verses" was doubled on Monday to 250,000 kroner (\$34,250). William Nygaard's publishing house, Aschehoug Forlag, added 125,000 kroner (\$17,125) to rewards offered after Mr. Nygaard was shot three times in the back outside his house on Oct. 11. Mr. Nygaard, 50, was released from Ullevaal hospital last Wednesday and was expected to recover fully from the wounds. He remained under police protection. "It is unbearable to not know who was behind the attack," Erik Holst of Aschehoug told the Norwegian news agency NTB. "We are happy to offer such a reward if it can help. William Nygaard is not some aloof manager. He is a central person for all employees in the publishing house." Police say no evidence linking the attack to Salman Rushdie's book "The Satanic Verses," which the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran declared blasphemous in 1989.

U.N. wants more data from Iraq

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The head of a team of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) experts who arrived here on Monday said Iraq had not provided full details on how it developed its nuclear weapons programme.

"We are not satisfied with the information on some subjects they have provided," said Richard Hooper, the American head of the 13-member team, which will spend a week testing radiation levels in water supplies and dealing with questions on long-term weapons monitoring.

Mr. Hooper said the team needed more information than was provided on a list of nuclear and chemical weapons suppliers given to Rolf Ekeus, the head of the United Nations special committee on dismantling Iraq, during talks in Baghdad in October.

When it ended a month-long mission to Iraq on Saturday, a U.N. team of more than 60 weapons experts reported it had found no evidence Iraq was in violation of a U.N. ban on its weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Hooper said the Iraqi authorities had identified "at least in part individuals from whom they obtained technical help."

"Their reaction is that information will be provided during this mission," Mr. Hooper added. The missing information concerned how Iraq obtained its centrifuge equipment and other technical assistance, he explained.

The team was currently verifying information contained on the list of suppliers, Mr. Hooper said, but in some areas there was "still a long way to go," and information was still "in the hands of other governments." He did not specify which countries were involved.

The additional information was necessary for long-term surveillance of Iraqi weapons, required under the U.N. resolutions ending the 1991 Gulf war.

U.N. officials have reported progress in dismantling Iraq's war machine.

The United Nations is also making arrangements for the safe shipment from Iraq to Russia of about 40 kilograms of nuclear fuel.

Mr. Hooper said filling in the remaining gaps was essential for the IAEA, now striving to establish the groundwork for future monitoring of Iraq's nuclear potential.

"In order to proceed with monitoring we have to establish a base for that and part of that base is not just the equipment but the procurement roots and... who provided the technical advice," he said.

Heavy fighting reported outside Afghan capital

KABUL (Agencies) — Fighters loyal to Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar attacked a provincial town controlled by Defence Ministry troops early Monday, a ministry spokesman here said.

Heavy fighting is still going on at the moment," the spokesman, Abdullah, told a press conference.

He said the attack, which was launched by fighters belonging to Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezbe-e-Islami faction started at 5:45 a.m. (0115 GMT) from three different directions, was aimed at Tagab, a small town in Kapisa province to the east of Kabul.

"It is a fully coordinated attack by Hezbe-e-Islami commanders under the direct command of Hekmatyar," Mr. Abdullah charged.

Mr. Abdullah said the attack, which he claimed had so far made no successful advances, started in Tagab despite assurances given by Mr. Hekmatyar at a Sunday cabinet meeting that "there will be a permanent ceasefire and we are not going to use weapons to solve problems in the future."

No immediate casualty figures were available, Mr. Abdullah said. But he added that he expected "heavy civilian casualties" as this was the season for the pomegranate harvest. The spokesman said some Hekmatyar commanders around Tagab had refused to join in the attack because of the harvest.

Mr. Abdullah said Defence Ministry troops would not retaliate against Mr. Hekmatyar's forces in the south part of Kabul.

"The fight started outside Kabul and we do not want it to

COLUMN

2 11-year-olds stand trial in toddler's murder

LIVERPOOL, England (AFP) — Two 11-year-old boys went on trial for murder here Monday, the youngest persons so charged in England in 30 years.

After the brutal killing of a toddler that produced a wave of outrage here, Although British criminal law allows persons as young as 10 to be tried for murder, special conditions were imposed by the presiding judge. Neither the defendants nor any of the juvenile witnesses in the case will be named or identified in any way. In addition to their lawyers, each defendant was accompanied by a court-appointed social worker to remain at his side at all times. Special benches were also constructed so the defendants would be able to sit high enough to see the proceedings over the courtroom railing.

The two boys are charged with abducting and murdering two-year-old James Bulger, who had strayed from his mother's side at a shopping centre in Bootle on Feb. 12, his badly beaten body was found on the bank of a railway line in the town. The two are also charged with trying to abduct a second two-year-old boy earlier on the same day. The killing stirred bitterness and hatred in the tiny working class community of Kirkby near where the Bulger family lives.

Diana 'seeking reconciliation' with Charles

LONDON (AP) — A tabloid newspaper reported that Princess Diana was seeking a reconciliation with her estranged husband, Prince Charles. Diana is seeking "a marriage of convenience," the Sunday Express said, quoting unnamed friends and "informed sources." "She would be happy to live under the same roof as Charles, but not necessarily the same floor," it said. The newspaper said Prince Charles was cool towards the idea. Prince Charles and Princess Diana formally separated in December 1992 after 11 years of marriage. They have two children, Prince William, 11, and Prince Harry, 9.

Prince Edward visits Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN (AFP) — Britain's Prince Edward arrived Sunday in Yamoussoukro for a four-day visit to Ivory Coast, national radio said here. Queen Elizabeth's youngest son is visiting as part of his work for youth organisations and was welcomed at the airport by Foreign Minister Amara Essy and Sports and Youth Minister Rene Diby. Prince Edward is also due to meet Prime Minister Alassane Ouattara in Abidjan as well as British businessmen working here.

41 forms of unmapped sea life identified

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — Researchers examining fossils in northeastern Brazil have identified 41 species of sea life never registered before, the daily O Globo reported Sunday. The shellfish fossils were discovered by a team from the Federal University of Pernambuco along a stretch of the northeast coast about 2,478 kilometres north of Rio. The shellfish, ranging from 2-20 centimetre (one inch to 10 inches), long, lived up to 83 million years ago, paleontologist Geraldo Barros Muniz, director of research for the 12-year-old project, told the newspaper.

Japan firms hire record number of disabled — survey

TOKYO (R) — Private Japanese companies employed a record 240,385 handicapped people as of June 1993, but are still not meeting minimum legal requirements, a Labour Ministry survey showed. The figure, up a scant 0.05 per cent from 1992, represents 1.41 per cent of the total workforce, short of the target ratio of 1.6 per cent set by the Handicapped Employment Promotion Law, it said. "Employment of the handicapped has increased as society better understands their needs. On the other hand, the effects of the recession have lowered the rate of employment in general," Kyodo News Agency quoted a ministry official as saying.

Party seeking confederation with Jordan formed in East Jerusalem

By Said Ghazali
The Associated Press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — A Palestinian activist and a veteran journalist announced Monday that they were establishing a new political party to lobby for a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinians.

"Our wish is to have one government for the Gaza Strip, West Bank and Jordan. Palestinians are the majority there and Jordan has interests here," activist Mohammad Subeih told a press conference.

The new party, called the Palestinian-Jordanian Beit Al Maqdis (Jerusalem) Movement, would also serve as a private conduit for Arab aid during the autonomy period to start in December.

"We have positive promises from various Arab countries including Gulf states to finance a new hospital and a university," said Mr. Subeih. He said the group had raised pledges of \$12 million so far. The Gulf states have

resisted giving any money directly to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) or to Jordan since the 1991 Gulf war, when Palestinians and Jordanians backed Iraq against the U.S.-led alliance.

The organisers said both Jordan and the PLO had approved the idea for their party. But Mr. Subeih said disputes with the PLO over control of the money and local institutions were likely. Founders saleb Seyam, a former journalist in the PLO's Al Shaab newspaper, said Palestinians could never be completely separate from Jordan.

"We had lived under Jordanian rule for 19 years. They are in need of us and we are in need of them," Mr. Seyam said.

Israel too considers some kind of Palestinian-Jordanian entente as the best insurance against a radical state emerging from the areas being given autonomy.

The issue of Jerusalem is a key stumbling point. Israel says it will remain its undi-

vided capital, but the Palestinians want the eastern portion as their capital.

The city has important symbolic and religious meaning for the Royal Hashemite family. King Abdullah, grandfather of King Hussein, was assassinated here in 1951 and buried in Al Aqsa Mosque. The King's great grandfather, Sharif Hussein Ibn Ali, is also buried here. Mr. Subeih, a former organiser for the Communist Party, faulted the PLO for not coordinating its ties with Jordan into "facts on the ground." King Hussein was not consulted about the autonomy accord, but supports it.

King Hussein severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank in July 1988 in favour of the PLO, which previously resisted the formation of parties affiliated with Jordan.

About 60 per cent of Jordan's four million population has Palestinian origins, whereas the occupied territories contain 1.5 million Palestinians.

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